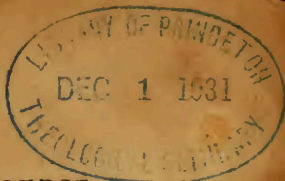


THE



# LIFE, CONVERSION,

PREACHING, TRAVELS, AND SUFFERINGS

OF

**ELIAS SMITH.**

—○○○○○○—  
WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

*"And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy  
God led thee, these forty years in the wilderness."*

Deut. viii. 2.

*"Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."*

John vi. 12.

==  
VOL. I.  
==

PORTSMOUTH, N. H.

Printed by BECK & FOSTER; sold by the Author, No. 2,  
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1816.



*DISTRICT OF NEW-HAMPSHIRE.....to wit.....*

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the twenty-ninth day of February, in the fortieth year of the Independence of the United States of America, ELIAS SMITH, of the said District, has deposited in this Office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as author, in the words following.....*to wit*.....“The Life, Conversion, Preaching, Travels and Sufferings of Elias Smith, written by himself....And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee, these forty years in the wilderness....Deut. viii. 2....Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost....John vi. 12....Vol. I.”....In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, “an act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;” and also to an act, entitled, “an act supplementary to an act, entitled, an act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned; and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints.”

G. W. PRESCOTT,

*Clerk of the New-Hampshire District.*

## INTRODUCTION.

FRIENDS AND BRETHREN,

Introductions to books are seldom read ; being generally considered *too long*, or uninteresting. Please to read mine, as it is short, if not the best.

When a man undertakes to write his life, or publish himself to the world, he enters upon a delicate piece of business on many accounts. If he is but little known before he writes, he will be but little known afterwards. If he is generally known ; to tell the public what they already know, is to profit them but little. To publish every trifling circumstance in life, is but to expose a man's weakness, more than when he acted in a trifling manner.

There is a difficulty attending this kind of writing, which cannot well be avoided ; that is of saying I, so often ; the author having himself constantly in view, while writing upon the subject.

The object a man must have in view, while writing his life, to make it profitable to others, must be this : a desire that others

may be profited by knowing what he has known ; by doing what he has done ; by avoiding what he has avoided ; or shunning things which he would have shunned, had some person of experience, warned him in season of the danger, which he knew only by going where that danger was.

My study has been to write so that the profiting might appear to all that read what is written. I have endeavored according to the motto, to "remember all the way the Lord has led me these forty years," and "to gather up the fragments" that remained in my memory. I never kept any written journal of my life, excepting the time when the baptist ministers rose against me in Boston. The whole book, excepting about fifty pages, is written from what was retained in my memory ; and I am confident that in general the dates are correct. Should there be some mistakes of this kind, no one will consider it designed, when almost the only record to take the book from, was my memory.

It has taken about six weeks to write the volume ; which perhaps might have been done more correct, had more time been taken to write what is here communicated.

It was my design at first, to write more upon the doctrine of Christ ; and to give a more extensive account of the people called CHRISTIANS ; but this more properly belongs in another place. The last six years of my life, has been more important to me, and perhaps to others, than any six years of my

whole life. Finding the whole could not be comprised here, I concluded best to continue the particulars of the last six years, with many other important things, in a second volume, to be published as soon as it shall be called for by my friends and the public.

My desire is, that all who read may profit, and that young and old may serve the God of my youth, and we all through grace arrive safe at the end of the journey of life, to be citizens of the new Jerusalem, to go no more out ; and, freed forever from these *changes*, by a *change* from *mortality* to *immortality*, to set down in the kingdom with all the saved, to give glory to God and the LAMB forever. AMEN.

I subscribe myself, a FREEMAN from all *bondmen*, and as such, servant of all, for Jesus sake, and the least of all saints.

ELIAS SMITH.

Portsmouth, New-Hampshire, March 5, 1816.

N. B. The reader will notice the date in page 400. It ought to stand 1804, instead of 1814. It is likely there may be some other typographical errors, which the reader is requested to correct, or excuse.



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## *The Life, &c. of Elias Smith.*

### CHAPTER I.

HOW strange a thing is life ! When a man considers his own existence ; that he now is ; that once he was not ; that he had a being before he knew it ; that his existence shall not finally cease, but continue in a world without end ;—with these things in view, he will be led to say, “ I will praise thee ; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made ! ” If the existence of an individual is of so much importance to himself ; what must that be of millions in every age, down to the day when it will be said, that “ time shall be no longer ! ” We consider the existence of others but small ; though many consider their own of vast importance to themselves, and many others. Could I now write upon myself as a creature of God ; as one, in his hand, the instrument of good to others ; the subject would to me be pleasing, and to others profitable. In this way, the history of my life, would be to others, an account of the glory and grace of God to an individual, and an instructive lesson to all who shall come after who may

doubt, or be ignorant of the grace of him who is "good to all ; and whose tender mercies are over all his works."

It is my intention to give a faithful narrative of my life, and the things which have occurred, so far as my memory serves, and as the documents in my possession will enable me. I was born June 17, 1769, in the town of *Lyme*, county of New-London, state of Connecticut. My father's name was *Stephen Smith*. My mother's name before she was married, was *Irene Ransom*. They were both born in *Lyme*. My father's family were originally from England ; my mother's, I have been told, were from Wales. My mother was a second wife, and was thirteen years younger than my father. She was seventeen years and six months old when she was married, and nineteen years old the month I was born, being her first child. There were two brothers and two sisters besides. One sister is dead, and my father. My mother, two brothers and sister now live in Vermont. My oldest brother is a preacher ; the other a physician. Although my parents were never rich, yet they were industrious, and maintained, by their righteous lives, the honorable character of *christians* ; the one through life, the other to this day.

My father was a *baptist* by profession, till one year before he died. He was baptized when nineteen years old, which was fifty years before his death. The year he died, a church was gathered in *Woodstock, Vt.* where he re-

sided, which was called by the ancient name recorded in Acts xi. 26, CHRISTIANS. When confined to his house, he ordered his name recorded with the others, saying, he wished all to know that he esteemed the *name of Christ* above all other names on earth. My mother, who was first a congregationalist, and afterwards a *baptist*, became a member of the same church, and to this day remains a member with the christian brethren in that town.

There are almost three years of my life, that passed away without retaining any transactions of it in my memory. Soon after I was born, my father's mother, gave me the name *Elias*, to bear up the name of a son that was killed in some part of the state of New-York in the French war. This name never pleased me; and I often wished my name had been some other. The spring before I was three years old, my father moved into a new house which he had built; this is still in my memory, from a particular circumstance. A little girl in the neighborhood, five years old was at play with me, and some others a few rods from the house; while at play, she wanted a case knife I called mine, which I refused to give her. Soon after my refusal, she with a stick dug a large hole in the ground; I asked her what she dug the hole for; she said, to plant my knife; adding that if I planted it, the knife would come up, and be more. This pleased me much, as I had seen beans grow, and expected that in the course of a few weeks, the knives would hang down un-



der the leaves as thick as bean pods. She planted the knife with my consent ; telling me that it would come up in a short time. Believing what she said, I waited patiently for my knife to grow, but waited in vain, and at last dug after it, thinking it better to have the old one, than to wait so long for new ones. Not finding it, I told her the knife was not there. She told me, it had fallen down through the ground into the water, and was gone. I cried aloud at my loss, and determined never to plant a knife again. At that time my reasoning powers were not strong enough to tell what had become of my knife. At last I concluded it had come up by the one that planted it ; though she would never acknowledge the charge brought against her. This deception, and loss, afterwards was some benefit to me, as it made me cautious of the flatteries of those who promised me what appeared impossible for them to perform. This simple piece of my history contains two things for my readers—1. A caution to such as would deceive the ignorant. Be careful not to mislead those who are not capable of discerning between truth and error. This at first looks strange, that a child three years old should think a knife would grow. The fact is, children at first depend on what others tell them ; therefore tell them the truth. How many things are *believed*, which are as impossible as for a case knife to grow ; and believed because one older has said so. The doctrine of *transubstantiation*, or that the



bread and wine is the very body and blood of Christ which hung on the cross, is a deception of the same kind. A child—a man believes it, because he is told so; not because he has any evidence it is so. Telling children and grown people, that a little water put on their foreheads by a minister is of great importance to the person, is the same as planting the knife; there is no fruit of either, excepting the gain to him that deceives or misleads the ignorant. 2. This gives a caution to such as do not know. If a man tells you such a thing is true, ask him for the proof, that you may act the rational part in believing what he says.

The next thing retained in my memory, is a circumstance which took place the summer following, when four years old. One evening as I stood by my father, who sat in the door, there came a bird, called (in Connecticut) *Whip-poor-will*, (or *Whip-'o-will*;) and lighted near us. Being pleased with the bird, I thought nothing more was needful but to reach out my hand, and to have him at once in my possession. As I reached out my hand moderately, to take him, he flew a few feet, and stood still; this encouraged me to hope he would soon be mine. When I came near him, he flew farther than before, and as he flew farther, my desire to obtain him increased; after treating me in this manner repeatedly, he flew far from me, and rising into the air, sung such a song as taught me his liberty, and my folly in attempting to make him a captive.

By this time, I had run several rods from the house, and found myself near a grove, in the dark, far from my father, in danger, as I apprehended, and to heighten my trouble, disappointed of that which I had in vain run for. My trouble and disappointment caused me to cry aloud, and return to my father, who said I had learnt, never to run after a bird that could fly, with hope of catching him, because I wished to be gratified with him at the expence of his liberty.

This little circumstance, although grievous at first, in a few years afterwards afforded me many profitable lessons, for it was the whole of a worldlings life in miniature. Something to call our own, is the first thing a child desires, and is what a man wishes for to the last of life. It would appear foolish to any man of sense, to see a little boy of four years old running with the vain hope of catching a bird with the use of his wings; such folly, and greater is daily seen, and seen among those who would be wise. This was proved to me before I was fifteen years old. There are three things which all desire—1. RICHES, 2. HONOR, 3. PLEASURE. The course which people in general take to obtain these three things, is the same as that taken to catch the bird; and multitudes, after running years for nought, and in vain, say this is not the way for true *riches*, lasting *honor*, and durable *pleasure*.

When a man, young or old, strives to obtain riches, by extortion, oppressing the poor,

or depriving the laborer of his wages ; by gaming, lying, or stealing, he strives to obtain that which he will never possess in peace, nor will it long endure. Such riches take to themselves wings and fly away as the eagle ; this is not the way to obtain durable riches. Isaiah says, “ As a partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not, so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and his end shall be a fool.” Solomon says, “ Wealth gotten by deceit is soon wasted ; but he that gathereth by labor shall increase in riches.”—“ He that hasteth to be rich shall not be innocent. He that is greedy of gain, troubleth his own house, and shall inherit the wind.” He may have the air to breath in, though confined within the grates. When I see such men, I say, you will never, in this way, catch the bird. Thousands, to obtain that which is not theirs by right, drown themselves in destruction and perdition, through the love of that which is the root of all the evils they endure.

*Honor*, is another thing which many seek after in the same manner, as I endeavored to obtain the whip-'o-will. *Honor* signifies respect, or praise from others. Sometimes a young man thinks he shall obtain this, by gay clothing, expensive beyond his abilities ; by using profane language at the beginning, or end of almost every sentence he utters ; by speaking lightly of his father or mother ; by treating with ridicule public worship, the bible, preachers, or those who fear God and work

righteousness ; by glorying in being free from superstition ; and considering all real religion as a jest, fit only for the lower classes of people ; by becoming a noted gambler, or shewing others how much strong drink he can use without being intoxicated. A man may think to obtain *honor* in this way ; but such an one in this way, will never obtain what he seeks for ; it will fly far from him. Such, in that course, live to see themselves sunk in disgrace, lamenting, when too late, that the object they pursued is gone far from them, while they are left in the dark, to mourn their folly in trying to obtain that which never came in the way they sought after it. Some young women think to obtain respect among their own sex, or the other, by gay attire, needless ornaments, too much talk, frequent visits to the neglect of business ; by thinking it a reproach to work with their hands ; by frequenting balls, and despising sobriety, and other mental female ornaments. Do they obtain *honor* in this way ? No ; it flies away forever, and they mourn at the last ; retire to live unseen and almost unknown, or die with grief. A female character, when once gone, is like a broken looking-glass, which can never be made whole. Should this book fall into the hands of any of this description, or any who may think of obtaining honor in this way ; remember, *that whatever parade and shew women may make abroad, their real worth is known only at home.* Some who are settled in life, think of obtaining honor by extravagance in dress



high living, beyond their income, and by a great appearance ; remember, you will obtain respect among none but such people, and such people are fools, or they would never be pleased with such extravagant, foolish and hurtful things.

*Pleasure*, is another thing sought for in the same way. Thousands of men and women have become poor, wretched, miserable, blind and naked, by endeavoring to please themselves with that which is out of their reach. Solomou says, "He that loveth *pleasure* shall be a poor man." Many seek for that which they think would please them, whether it is right or wrong, acting according to their inclination, and not according to what is duty. If duty and inclination are not in harmony, we should always follow what is duty, and though it may be disagreeable at first, it will be pleasing in the end. It is better to mourn and be comforted, than to receive our consolation first, and mourn at the last. The pleasures of sin are only for a season, and they are never real. How many have sacrificed *riches* and *honor* on the altar of sinful pleasures, and in the end been destitute of them all !

The way to obtain riches in this world, is to gather by labor, looking to God for his blessing on our labor. Honor among good men is obtained by doing to others, as you would have them do to you. Pleasure here is obtained only in eschewing evil and following that which is good. Durable riches are obtained only by obedience to him who di-



rects us to lay up treasure in heaven. Lasting honor is only to such as honor Christ; such his Father will honor here, and hereafter. *Pleasures* durable, are enjoyed only by such as rejoice in God, and live to him; such shall have pleasures forevermore.

The summer I was four years old was the first of my being sent to school; what progress I made, is now unknown to me; however by the time I was six or seven years old, I could read some in the New-Testament. It was a practice in that part of Connecticut, at that time, to send young children to the school three months in the summer, and three months in the winter. Boys of eleven or twelve years old, generally were sent to school only in the winter. My father took much pains to have his children attend the school when they could; he many times carried me more than one mile on his back, when the snow was so deep I could not walk. Once I was chastised for being unwilling to attend school because desirous to see an uncle who came to visit us. From my first learning to read, I had a pleasure in learning. My memory was never quick, but strong to retain what I learnt. After ten years old I attended school through every winter, till the winter before I was thirteen years old. Since that time, I have been at school thirty days to learn Dilworth's grammar, ten days to learn arithmetic and eight evenings to learn music.

When about five years old, the war between England and America was declared, This

was distressing to me ; as my father lived in sight of Long-Island Sound, where I often saw the British ships of war, saw the smoke of their cannon, and heard their terrifying report. I was six years old the day the battle on Bunker-Hill was fought. This news came to us in a short time, and terribly alarmed me, as I supposed death would be certain to us all ; and some young sons of what was then called *tories*, affrighted me, by telling what the *regulars* would soon do to the *rebels*. Though I did not know the meaning of *tory*, *regular*, *rebel*—yet there was fixed at that time a rooted aversion to the two first words, as I thought it meant such as would kill us, or encourage others to do it. This aversion has remained to this day. And though my hatred to *tories* and *regulars* is gone, yet an aversion to their principles remain to this day.

About this time, I began to think of myself, what I was, and how my existence came. There was a certain something that shewed me what was right, and what was wrong, and that something seemed to speak to me, and blame me for what I thought, designed, said, or did, that was wrong. Righteousness was revealed to me, though there was then no name I knew to call it by. It seemed at certain times to bring before me all ever done wrong ; to shew me that I was in a dangerous situation, and that same *something* taught me that in some time to come, my wickedness would be brought against me. This troubled me greatly ; so that often I would take my spelling-book,

which had a form of prayer in it, and go to the barn, and read it with weeping, hoping that by this my sins which were committed against my parents, and others, might be forgiven. I often heard my parents speak of Christ, and as they sometimes had preaching at their house, it gave me an opportunity to hear baptist ministers pray, preach, sing and converse. Many things they said, I laid up in my memory, and retain them to this day. The things they said, as to futurity, had a deep and lasting impression on my mind, as I believed they spake the truth. I used often to listen, hoping to hear what that was that so often told me I was wrong, and seemed to blame me for it. After several years, I was told by some that it was the "*light of nature.*" Some said it was "*natural conscience ;*" but when I read the scripture account, I found it to be the *spirit* or influence of the eternal God on my mind ; called by John, "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John i. 9. This light shined in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. I knew the light, but did not know what it was at first, nor from whence it came. Not far from this time, the *northern lights* were frequently seen. These greatly alarmed many of the old and young, as they thought them signs of the end of the world. Being young and ignorant, I was alarmed at that which alarmed others, supposing they knew when there was danger and when there was not. Every thing that had the appearance of dan-

ger troubled me ; for the wicked are in fear when no fear is, and much more when they see themselves exposed. Thunder and lightning terrified me, as I thought my life was in danger ; believing if I died a sinner, ruin was certain to me. Many times before I was eight years old, I lay awake till late, thinking what would become of me, and sometimes wished I had never existed ; or that I had been any thing but an accountable creature. From these things, I am certain that the Creator never neglects his creatures, till they long, and wickedly neglect him ; nor are the nations left in the dark as many suppose. Light has come into the world, and men, young and old are condemned, because they love darkness rather than light. (John, iii. 19.) It is now plain to me what caused me to be troubled as a sinner, which was this : *A clear manifestation of what was right, and a strong inclination and fixed determination for that which was wrong.*

## CHAPTER II.

There is one circumstance which took place when I was not far from eight years old, which I think proper to mention as a part of my life, for others to be acquainted with, which shall be related according to the best of my remembrance ; that is my being sprinkled, or baptised, as some call it. My father was a baptist, and did not believe in sprink-



ling children nor grown people ; my mother at that time, was what was then called a new-light congregationalist ; and so was her mother, sister, and all her brethren, excepting one, who was a *baptist preacher*. Some time before she had her three children sprinkled, her baptist brother came to visit her ; before he left her, she asked him about having her children sprinkled ; he, in a very grave manner, asked her this question, "*How would you have them sprinkled ?*" She replied, "*As other people do.*" "*As other people do,*" said he, "*is this all ?*" These questions gave her such a shock, that she said no more upon the subject to him. In consequence of this, the ceremony was omitted a year or two. Before it was done, her eldest brother came to see her, who was a strong advocate for sprinkling children. In the course of their conversation, (my father being absent,) while the three children were in the house, he said in my hearing ; " sister, I wonder you do not have your children baptized, and not bring them up like heathens." She said, " your brother, you know is a baptist, and will not assist me in doing it, and so it is neglected." He told her he would assist if she would bring her children to the meeting-house ; and they agreed on the time when it should be done. This troubled me not a little ; though I was determined never to submit to it. In the evening my father returned from his labor, and my mother related to him what she and my uncle had agreed upon. He told her

he should not forbid it, nor assist her in having the children sprinkled, though he would go to the meeting with her, and help get the children there. This was all she desired ; so the matter ended at that time. The horror of the scene soon wore off, and I almost forgot that any such thing was to be done to me.

Some time after this, my mother told me on Sunday morning, that we were all going to meeting that day. This at first gave me joy, as I had an anxious desire to see my cousins who attended that meeting. Soon after, the thought of being sprinkled passed through my mind and greatly damped my joy ; but concluded to go cheerfully and escape from the meeting-house, before the business came on. We were all dressed as well as circumstances in life would allow ; my mother, and two younger brothers rode on an horse, and I walked with my father to the destined place, which was about three miles. My heart was filled with joy to find my relations I had so much wished to see. As soon as the forenoon meeting was done, we went into an orchard, that was near, and spent the time as best pleased ourselves ; till it was time to return to the afternoon meeting. When we came up to the meeting-house door, I observed a large bason of water standing before the pulpit, which gave me a terrible shock ; my enquiry at once was, what is that bason there for ? My cousin who was older, and had seen more of the world, said, “ that is to christen chil-

dren, you will be christened this afternoon." I said, no, I will not be christened, I will go home, and turned to run. He said, stop, sit with me, and when the minister comes down to do it, I will let you out. Having obtained this promise from him, I went in and sat very uneasy, watching every motion of the minister, with my hat in my hand, ready for a flight, on the shortest notice; at last he came down; at that instant my cousin touched the pew door, which opened, and I endeavored immediately to make my escape; though it was to no purpose. My uncle pursued, and soon overtook, and brought me back. I attempted in vain to escape from him; as he threatened me severely. Notwithstanding all my exertions, I was brought in front of the bason; and was so confined, hands and feet, that I was obliged to receive what they called the seal of the covenant. I felt such malice against the minister and my uncle, that had my strength been equal to my desire, we should all have been like Sampson and the Phillistines, with the house about our ears. My mother was greatly mortified at my stubbornness, and I at that which caused it. I wiped off what they called the seal, in such a manner as convinced all the spectators that the compelled was greatly enraged. My other brothers being younger, received this mark in their foreheads without making any resistance. This account of sprinkling a child by force, has a very different appearance from that recorded in the New-Testament, where

we read that believers in Christ voluntarily submitted to him, when buried with him in baptism, and raised to walk in newness of life. Many children have shewn the same opposition to this invention of men, which is soon to perish in the using.

The spring before I was nine years old, my father went to the east part of the town, within ten miles of New-London, with his family, to live on a farm belonging to a widow. In this place he lived two years. In this part of the town I became, in a small degree, acquainted with the people called *baptists*, with whom my father belonged. The preacher's name was *Jason Lee*, a worthy, good man; and one the Lord owned abundantly as a preacher of the everlasting gospel. In the time my father lived here, there was a very great out-pouring of the spirit of God, among old and young. Elder *Lee*, was the first person I ever saw baptize according to the New-Testament. This was the Summer I was nine years old. The circumstances of it, I well remember, which were the following: At noon, the minister and congregation walked about one mile to a large stream. The people stood on each side, appearing very solemn. I stood near where he was to baptize; and after speaking upon baptism, and praying in a devout manner, he took a young man by the hand, and led him where the water was of a sufficient depth, and standing—lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, "In obedience to the great King and head of



the Church I baptize thee in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,"—and then put him gently down under the water, and, raising him out, led him to the land. As the young man walked out of the water, with a cheerful countenance, he said—" *The wondering world inquire to know ; why I should love my Jesus so.*" This fell with great weight on my mind, as I believed him happy, though I could not tell what was the cause of his happiness.

Next the minister took another younger than the first. This alarmed me, as I feared he might take me next, not knowing but he took some by force, as the other minister did. Placing myself where I thought he would not take me, I viewed the whole with admiration, thinking why a young person should be willing thus to be put under water.

This summer and the following, there was a general reformation through the town. A great number of people, young and old, were evidently converted to the Lord ; and though my affections were fixed on things earthly, yet I was convinced that others had that which was as needful for me as them. The meetings this and the following summer often continued till midnight ; while the exhortations and prayers of the young people took great hold of my mind, and often brought me to pray that I might be a sharer with them. These things, with the alarm of war, which we frequently heard from New-London and other parts, led me often to think of my un-

done situation, and to wish for that which I was unwilling to have at the loss of sinful pleasures. The aversion to religion, which I had, in consequence of being sprinkled by force, was a great hurt to my young mind ; and on that account, though willing to hear, I would not say one word, when any person spake to me of the importance of a part in Christ. That same kind reprove, which taught me when only five or six years old, continued at times to reprove me of sin, righteousness and judgment, until brought to experience the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

In the spring of the year, 1780, when in my eleventh year, my father hired a farm of Capt. *John Robinson*, in *Hebron*, thirty miles from *Lyme* ; he carried his family there in April, and lived there over two years. In this time my mind was strongly inclined to sinful pleasures, though I never used bad language, nor conducted so as to be considered an example of wickedness. In this town, in the winter of 1782, I had my last schooling, excepting forty days and eight evenings in the state of Vermont. My knowledge of letters was such as to be able to read the bible some, though I did not know the meaning of a comma, semicolon, colon, period, note of interrogation, admiration, nor any other mark used in reading. These things were not then taught in country schools. My proficiency in writing was but small ; arithmetic, I was entirely ignorant of, and at that time had never heard of a book

called *Dictionary*. In the course of these two years, my mind was many times greatly alarmed, on account of the distresses of war; which I read in the newspapers, which I had never seen till then. The distress at the taking of *Groton Fort*, when about seventy women were made widows in one day; burning of *New-London* by the British, and *Royalton*, (Vt.) by the Indians, with the signs in the heavens, solemn preaching, which I sometimes heard, and oftentimes a sense of the uncertainty of my own life; all these things at times brought me to the borders of despair, and led me to fear that I was given over to hardness of heart, and blindness of mind. Being naturally of a bashful, timid make, I never conversed much upon any subject, with young or old. Many times I refused to go into company, because I could not think of any thing to say; and often wondered how other people could always think of so much to say as they did, when it was not in my power to do the same. It was never difficult to think of enough to meditate upon, though I had nothing to say. My final conclusion was that I had not *common sense*, and so the matter has stood to this day; for the same difficulty, as to common conversation has attended me till now. One thing occurred in the summer of 1781, which is worthy of notice. My father and his family generally attended a baptist meeting in *Andover*, about three miles from where we lived, at the house of an old man by the name of *Atherton*. This

meeting I generally attended. In August, after I was twelve years old, we heard that a young man was to preach there by the name of *William Grew*, from *Abington*, in *Connecticut*. My desire to hear him was very great, I walked on foot early to hear all he preached. In the forenoon he preached in the house ; how he preached, I do not now remember. The assembly was so large in the afternoon, that the meeting was held in the orchard. Every thing about the preacher drew my attention to him. He was young, decently dressed, had a melodious and commanding voice ; his being in early life engaged in preaching Christ ; having left all for him ; all these things led me to admire him. I considered him the happiest man on earth, and one whom God delighted to honor. I do not now remember his text, but remember his subject, and believe shall, so long as my memory retains any thing. It was this—“ *The glory of Christ, as the judge of the world.*” His description of Christ was new to me, and glorious beyond all I had ever heard before. He described him from the manger to the cross ; from the cross to the throne, and from the throne to the judgment-seat. After describing the glory of Christ in a manner to me then beyond all I had ever imagined, he said :

“ *All over glorious is my Lord ;—Must be below’d and yet ador’d ;  
 “ His worth if all the nations knew ;—Sure the whole earth would  
 love him too.”*

When he came to describe the last judgment, I seemed for a while to forget the



preacher, myself, and every thing earthly. O, to what a pitch of wonder, grief, and desire was my mind wrought up, when he described the state of the immortal saints, at the time Christ will say, "Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!" Then (said he) it will be glory to God; glory to Christ; glory to angels; glory to the apostles; glory to martyrs; glory to saints; glory to parents; and glory to *William Grow*." O how these things sounded in my ears, and to my heart! In all this glory, there was none mentioned for me, as I was neither of the characters he described who would share in that glory. The solemnity which these things brought on my mind remained long; and were never wholly worn off, until I found peace in believing. It so happened, that the same preacher, almost seven years after, baptized me in the town of Woodstock, Vermont.

### CHAPTER III.

In the spring of 1782, my father sold what property he had in Lyme, intending to purchase land in Woodstock. In April he set out for Vermont, taking my oldest brother with him. He purchased one hundred acres of land in the south part of Woodstock, made what preparation he could for the convenience of his family, and leaving my brother, return-

ed home in June, to make ready to carry his family there before winter. Some time in the month of August of that year, we commenced the journey of one hundred and eighty miles, which we performed in thirteen days. The thought of going the journey was peculiarly pleasing to me, as I had, from my first remembrance, a constant desire to see more of the world than was in sight of my father's house. Although I was obliged to walk almost the whole way, yet my mind was so gratified in seeing new towns, large villages, elegant buildings, magnificent bridges, lofty mountains and deep vallies, that the fatigue of walking was small, compared to the pleasure these things afforded me. On Saturday, after passing through dismal swamps, ascending and descending terrible hills, where the roads seemed at first impassible, we, to our great joy, arrived at the town we set out for, which was represented to me as resembling the land of Canaan ; a land of hills and vallies, flowing with milk and honey. The first part I found true, for the country appeared to be hills and vallies, and this was not an imaginary appearance, for so it remains in that part of the country, to this day.

The Monday after our arrival, I sat out from where we put up, with my father, mother, brothers and sisters, and several of the neighbors, with our goods, to go to the house we were in future to make the place of our abode. We had about two miles to go ; the first mile we went without much difficulty ;

this brought us to the foot of an hill which we were to ascend to get to the house. A considerable part of this mile, a cart had never been. It took us till sometime in the afternoon, to cut away the logs and stumps so that the team could pass along. After many sweats and hard pulls, my father pointed us to the house, about forty rods ahead, the sight of which struck a damp on my spirits, as it appeared to me only an abode of wretchedness. After going to it and taking a general view of the house and land around, before the team came up, I determined within myself to return to Connecticut ; thinking it better to be there to dig clams for my living, than to be in such a place. I was disappointed, grieved, vexed and mad, to think of living in such a place. Though I was some over thirteen years, I cried ; part of the time because I was disappointed, and sometimes for madness. With this fixed determination to return, I went down to the team, and passed by the team down the steep and dismal hill as fast as possible. My father, observing my rapid course, called after me, asking me where I was going ; and commanded me to return to him. I feared to disobey him and returned. He asked me where I was going ; my reply was, to *Connecticut*. He ordered me to return. This order I obeyed, though with great reluctance, as it appeared to me better to die than be confined to such a place.

I will now give my readers a correct description of the place which was so dreadful

to me. The dwelling place stood on the north side of a very large hill, half a mile from any house. Around the house, (as it was called,) there were twelve acres of land, that the trees were cut down and lay in different directions, excepting a small place where the house stood. There was no way to look, to see far, without looking up, as the trees around prevented seeing any house or cleared land, in any direction whatever. The house was made of split bass-wood logs, locked together at the corners. There was no floor to the house, nor was there any roof to it. The grass had grown up within these wooden walls, and there was one large stump in the middle of the house, which, to heighten my trouble as I thought, my father said would do for a *light stand*. We made a fire by the side of a log; cooked some dinner, and let our horse eat down the grass in the house, before we prepared it for a lodging place for a night. My father had prepared boards for a chamber floor, and shingles for the roof; but had not time to put them on before he returned. The shingles consisted of brown ash bark, eight feet long, and from four to six feet wide. We corded up our bedsteads on the ground; and before night, placed over our heads several of those large pieces of bark, and at night, without any floor but the ground, having no door, with a few pieces of bark over our heads to keep off the dew, we lay down to sleep and all rested quietly till morning.



The next day, my father and several men who understood building log houses, put on a roof of bark, and split bass wood logs, (lining the edges,) and laid them down for a floor. After being laid down, they were smoothed some with an adze; this was some rough, but better than none. We set up three large flat stones for jambs and the back of our fireplace, and laid an hearth in uniform with the other parts. At that time the town was new, the people but few, and in general not very rich. There was not then, to my remembrance, but two framed houses in the town; one stood on the ground now called the green, near where the court-house, jail, meeting-house and other elegant buildings now stand. The north part of the town being settled first, they were generally in better circumstances, than those in the south part. With all these things in view, each one will be convinced that we had a trying scene before us. My father sold his property in Lyme for eighty pounds, and gave an hundred for what he purchased in Woodstock. The journey took off considerable of it, so that he was left about forty pounds in debt, when he moved his family on to the land he had purchased. He sold his oxen, cart and horse to the man he bought the land of; this left us in a poor situation to clear up a farm, that could hardly be done without the strength of the ox. We endeavored to make ourselves contented in our new and poor situation. We expected a long winter and had but little provision, and the crops

that year were generally short. We had two cows, and but little for them, to what they really needed. In December, my father went on foot to Lyme, two hundred miles, to obtain the remainder due for his property he sold there; which he calculated would purchase a yoke of oxen. He obtained them, and drove them home about the last of January, 1783. We rejoiced to see him and the oxen, hoping we should be able to clear our land of the heavy timber which stood or lay upon it, that in a future day we might be delivered from that want we then felt, and the greater we feared. It was with great difficulty we wintered our oxen and cows; we were obliged to fall elm and maple trees, and cut off the limbs for the cattle, the small ends of which they ate with a little hay we gave them. In this way they lived through the winter. The first snow that fell that year, was on the sixteenth day of October; it fell about twelve inches deep. This greatly alarmed us, as we had never before lived where there was much snow. This soon went off, and we had pleasant weather till the first of December. After that we never saw the ground again till some time the next April.

One man said, that had it not been for three things, Vermont would never have been settled. *Elm and ash bark*, to cover their houses; *maple trees* which afforded good sugar, and *potatoes* which afforded food for many. In the latter part of this winter, we prepared for making sugar in the woods. The weath-

er was so mild, that we made some in February ; and while making troughs with my father, I cut my foot very bad, so that he carried me home through the snow on his back, nearly half a mile, leaving the blood on the snow as we passed along. I recovered of my wound, and was able to attend to the business in about one month. This work of making sugar was very hard. The way we attended to it was this : we dug a large place in the snow, which was generally three or four feet deep in March. Here we made our fire, and hung our kettles. Near the fire place, we trod down the snow, put four small poles down in the snow, and others on the tops of them ; covered them with hemlock bows ; laid some straw on the snow, for our bed, and had a blanket to throw over us. We were obliged to go on snow-shoes to gather the sap which run from the trees that stood around our camp. We had a kind of yoke which we put on our shoulders, so that we could carry two pails with ease. Sometimes a limb or bush would hold the snow-shoes, which would cause a person to fall his whole length forward. I had many such advances, and sometimes had a bucket of sap on me to add to the trouble. All the fatigue of the day, hard fare, and sleep on the snow, under hemlock boughs, never injured my health, as I had been inured to hardships from early life. The quantity of sugar we made this season was so great, that we felt ourselves richly re-

warded for all our hard labor, and thought ourselves in a comfortable situation to what many others were.

## CHAPTER IV.

After passing through the cold, and hardships of the winter ; hauling our wood by hand the first of the winter ; the toil in making sugar ; with our exertions to keep our cattle alive ; we were called to endure a loss which, at first, almost discouraged us. Early in the spring my father sold one of his cows, for grain, thinking we could get through the summer with one. Soon after one was sold and gone, we found the other dead in the woods, being cast, and not able to get on her feet again. It appeared to me then that the hand of God was against us, as the milk we expected from the cow, and bread, was the chief we depended on through the summer. My father was almost discouraged, and began to think he did wrong in leaving his native land. My mother bore the loss with uncommon fortitude, telling us we should be provided for ; which we found true ; for the same day a friend came to see us, who had several cows, who told my father he might have one of his till he could purchase another. As soon as the snow was gone so that we could work upon the land, we began to clear off the timber, and make ready for planting and sowing. The first piece we cleared, my



father fixed upon as a burying place. This he told us of in his last sickness ; and when he died he was buried in the same ground he and I cleared first, on his farm.

Through the summer of 1783, and '84, we had many hardships to endure, particularly for the want of provisions, which was generally scarce through the country. Through all these distressing scenes we all enjoyed uninterrupted health, excepting my mother, who appeared sometimes in a decline, though she afterwards recovered, and enjoys good health to this day. The second summer, my father carried on the tanning and currying business in the summer, and shoemaking in the winter, being business he had learned in Connecticut. Working with him, I became generally acquainted with the business ; but making shoes was such a confinement to me that I was obliged to quit it without becoming master of the trade. This business helped us some to live, and get through with paying for our land. The summer I was fifteen years old, was a distressing summer to us, and many others. For many weeks before harvest, almost the whole we had for food, was a little milk thickened with flour, in the morning, and not enough of that. This was all, of bread kind, we had through the day. We had a little milk to drink at night. For many days I ate my breakfast of milk thickened with flour, and went to work ; by eleven o'clock my food would all be gone, and my strength with it. When I could work no longer, I

used sometimes to take a basket and travel a mile or two among the raspberry bushes, eat some and bring some home for my supper, with the small portion of milk allotted me with the family. My other brothers did the same. I thought then, if we could have been supplied with a sufficiency of *potatoes*, it would have been rich living, compared with what we then had. There seemed no way for relief till the crops of grain were ripe ; for food was not to be had in the town. I remember one time which appeared to me the most distressing of all I endured that summer. One *first day* of the week, we ate our usual breakfast, and went to meeting about two miles. By the time we returned home, we were very faint, and there was nothing in the house to eat, excepting some wheat bran, and the milk the cow gave at night. My brother said he could eat the bran made into a pudding ; this was done, and he ate it, but I could not get it down, though very hungry and faint for the want of food, and therefore drank my milk, and retired to rest, that I might forget my poverty, and remember my wants no more till morning.

Some may think that this account is exaggerated ; but my mother, brothers and many others now living in that town, can bear witness to the truth of these things. There are many who complain of hard times, and that they are hardly dealt with, when at the same time they scarcely ever knew the want of food or raiment in their whole lives ; had they

known of want as it has been my lot to know it, they could not complain of coarse food and raiment, and feel innocent. Through all that time, my clothing in the winter was generally thin and coarse. I never owned a great coat till the winter before I was twenty years old ; and I was so used to a thin dress in cold weather, that I did not know the need of one for many years. Though these hard things were grievous to be borne, yet I believe they were in the end beneficial, as I have been able to endure hard things much better than though brought up in the lap of ease. And though since called to pass through things fatiguing to the body, I have never been confined with sickness but once in *forty years*, and then only for a few days. In the two first years of living in Woodstock, there was no school near to attend, so that instead of learning more, I really lost some of what I had gained in Connecticut. There were some religious privileges in the town which were partially improved by me, though but little to my advantage, through my great love to this present evil world. The war being closed this year, and those tumults at an end which had so alarmed me for seven years, my mind seemed more than before attached to things that are seen. My inward thought was, that I should live here forever, and my own existence to me, seemed of ten thousand times more importance than it really was. There were several meetings held constantly in different parts of the town ; the congregational people held a meeting in the

south part, first in a barn, and then in a small house which they purchased for that purpose. This meeting I generally attended, as it was near. They had no steady preacher; however, they were generally supplied. Mr. *Hutchinson*, of Pomfret, father to *Titus Hutchinson*, a lawyer in Woodstock, preached there often. Mr. *Damon*, of the north parish, preached some, and Mr. *Peletiah Chapen* some. He was a good man, and solemn preacher. Sometimes they had no preacher and then they read Flavel's or Whitfield's sermons, not thinking it right to neglect meeting together because they had no preacher. Oftentimes in these meetings my mind was solemnly and powerfully wrought upon by the force of that truth which was made manifest to me. At one time *Joseph Cottle*, read a sermon of Whitefield's on the last judgment. This greatly terrified me, as it had often before this time. The man was a good reader, and when he came to that part of the discourse, which describes the state of the wicked when the judge shall say to them, "*depart from me ye cursed,*" the preacher said, "When this sentence is passed by the judge, it will, it must be obeyed; it will be in vain for the wicked to resist; for the ground will be gone under them! and they will sink down! down! forever; lost and forever gone!" These words filled my mind with great distress, and I felt determined from that time to cease to do evil, and learn to do well; but I had not gone far from the house before other



things took my attention, and the good seed sown by the way side was taken away.

Within these two years, I first saw a dictionary, but did not know at first what it was designed for. The occasion of my seeing it was this : two men had been at meeting, and heard the minister use the word *canticles*. One asked the other the meaning of the word ; “ get the dictionary, (said the other) that will tell you.” He took Entick’s dictionary and soon found the word with its meaning. It appeared strange to me that the word used by the minister should be in that little book. This led me to enquire into the nature of it ; and how a word could be found ; and was surprised when told that almost all words we used, with their meaning, could readily be found there. Some may think strange that a person fourteen or fifteen years old should be so ignorant of a book now so common. Such books were not then in common use as now ; and further, every person is ignorant of that he never heard of. About all the books I had ever known to that time, were the primer, Dilworth’s spelling-book, Watt’s psalms and hymns, the new-testament and bible. These were about all the books my father owned, and these commonly were the library of a baptist minister in those days. Not far from the time I was fifteen years old, I first saw or knew a geography ; and it was in the following manner : My uncle wished me one winter to live with him. Not long after my residence with him, he one evening handed me

a book, called Guthrie's grammar, saying as he handed it, "there is a book which will be of great advantage to you, if you will take pains to read it." I received the book, and after asking him some questions, began to read it. There were some strange things in it, which appeared to me impossible, particularly things in Greenland, Lapland, Norway, and in other northern regions. It seemed to me like descriptions of another world, and another order of beings. I was surprised to think this world could be so large and contain so many countries, and people of such different nations, tongues, and languages.—These things may appear small to many; but I mention them to stir up parents to instruct their children in these things, so needful to the present life, and that they may do it in season, before their children come to an age when other things call them, so that they cannot pay that attention to learning which they wish; also these things are mentioned to encourage such as have been deprived of the advantages of education in early life; they may, notwithstanding all this, by patience and perseverance, attain to that which will be to their own benefit and make them useful to others for years to come.

While these things taught me my own ignorance, they fired me with zeal to gain useful knowledge, and with this a fixed resolution freely to instruct others, if it was ever in my power to do it.

These are a few of the many things which took place in the course of fifteen years, which are to this day retained in my memory, and given here for the perusal of others.

## CHAPTER V.

This chapter describes a new era in my life, and the things which have taken place since I entered my sixteenth year, are, of all, the most important to me. At this period, I became quite uneasy with my situation, knowing my ignorance and considering the disadvantages I labored under, by living where there was no school to attend, and being obliged to work very hard, with the rest of the family, in a new country, where many of the comforts of life were scarce, and could not be obtained but by hard, and almost constant labor. In the winter of my sixteenth year, (1785,) several of the people near where the south meeting-house now stands, agreed with my uncle, (Elisha Ransom,) a baptist minister, to teach their children that winter. This was two miles from my father's house. I had a great desire to attend the school, as he was a man remarkably qualified for that business. My desire being very great to go, my father consented that I should attend one month. This I considered a great privilege indeed; and the first Monday in January, 1785, I was, to my great joy, received as a member of the school, where I expected in one month

to acquire much useful information. My uncle examined me as to the knowledge of letters, and found, as he termed it, that I had been taught in the old Connecticut fashion, and said, "you must learn grammar."—This was new business to me. He gave me a lesson from Dilworth, which I entered upon with zeal, determining to learn what was the most useful.

On my return home, I informed my father of the study I had entered upon. He was not at all pleased with it; and told me, arithmetic was much more useful, as I could read some, and was entirely ignorant of the use of figures. This greatly damped my zeal, as he almost forbid my pursuing the study of grammar. The next day I told my uncle the opposition in my way. He said, you must learn it; this will be of advantage to you in reading, speaking and writing. He added, I will go and see your father this evening; this he did, to my great satisfaction. My father raised every argument in his possession against the grammar, and in favor of arithmetic. My uncle on the other hand plead for me, telling my father if his son was ever called into public life, this science would be of vast importance to him. Ah, said he, that he nor I may never calculate upon. To which my uncle replied, "you do not know what he may be." Finally, my father talked, my uncle argued, my mother joined her brother, and I wept; and all this turned the scale, so that my father said to me, you may do as you please. This



last sentence, led my uncle to say, "you now consent to that which will be worth more to your child than all your farm." All this was highly gratifying to me, and I pulled my book out of my pocket, taking fresh courage to learn what grammar meant.

My long walk every day, soon led me to see the disadvantage I was under by spending so much time in going and returning from the school. This I endeavored to remedy by reading, and committing my lesson to memory, as I passed and repassed from school. A way soon was opened to be relieved from this difficulty. One of the representatives of the town, invited me to stay at his house while he attended court, offering me my board if I would attend to his cattle, &c. in his absence. This invitation I gladly embraced, as it was near the school. There was no light allowed me in the night, excepting the light of the fire. This I improved to the best advantage. Oftentimes I laid my book on the hearth or floor, and lay down to get the small light the wood afforded me. This was a hard way of gaining light from the fire, and knowledge from my book ; but as this was the only way for me, I persevered in it for some time. Continuance in this practice injured my eyes very much in a short time ; though before this my eyes were uncommonly strong. In the course of the month of January, I had committed the greater part of Dilworth's grammar to memory, though my eyes, by reading without a candle were much injured. I had at the close of

the month, committed so much to memory, that it appeared to me that my memory could not contain much more, not knowing then that ignorance was what filled men's heads, and not knowledge. At the close of the month, when I left the school, my uncle encouraged me to pursue my studies, promising to assist me all in his power, which promise he faithfully performed ; and I am to this day more indebted to him for the knowledge of letters than all other men on earth. Close application to study by fire light, after leaving the school, weakened my eyes, so that in the end I was obliged wholly to quit reading for some time.

Not far from the time of leaving the school, a man by the name of *Jason Smith*, proposed to teach music one month, two evenings in each week, in the same neighborhood. Having a great desire to understand that pleasing science, I engaged with others to attend the school. Though my eyes had become quite weak, yet I undertook to commit to memory the part necessary to understand ; and in a short time, could repeat the whole correctly. In the eight evenings we attended, I acquired some knowledge of the art, so that in a short time after, I could sing a little by the rule laid down by Andrew Law. After the school was done, I paid close attention to the rules of music, till I supposed my understanding was informed as to the meaning of what Mr. Law had laid down. By this time my eyes were so weak, that I could not look in a book in the evening, and it was painful to me to read in the day

time. Many thought I should be wholly blind, before many months. This was very distressing to me, especially when I thought of being shut from the living while among them. The pleasure of thinking myself in possession of so much knowledge of *grammar* and *music*, as I supposed was in my possession, soon vanished, when thinking blindness might happen to me as the consequence. Every thing was done to help my eyes that was thought useful, but all to no purpose.

While troubled with the thought that I might lose my sight, a circumstance took place in the town, which caused me to fear a greater loss, that was the loss of life. The inhabitants of Woodstock had for several years been remarkably healthy ; and though there had been in former years, great and general revivals of religion in different parts of the town, yet at this time, there was a great inattention to the things of God, and things which concerned the peace of old and young. Those who professed to be born of God, appeared to have but little concern for those who lived without God in the world. This encouraged me and others of my age to go on in sin, thinking if our present danger was great, good people would warn us of our danger. In the month of March, a disorder began to prevail in Hartland and the south part of Woodstock, called the *canker-rash*. One young man, about eighteen years old, in Hartland, by the name of Slaton, was violently seized with this alarming disorder, and in a few days all hope

of his life was gone. Not long before he died, his father came into the room ; his son said, " father what do you think of my situation ? " His father with tears replied, " my son, you are now dying. " He said, " do you think I am ? " " Yes, " said his father. " Then (said he) if it is so, I am undone to all eternity ; O, how can I die without Christ ; I am undone ! undone, forever ! " He uttered these words and died immediately. The news of his death, and what he said to his father, was like a fire, and spread alarm wherever it came. The disorder alarmed the youth, thinking they too might die suddenly ; his saying he was undone, led others to think they also were undone. There was never any tidings that took such hold of me, as this concerning one I had been intimately acquainted with. All faces seemed, for a while, to gather paleness, and many began to say, what shall we do ? My old determinations to live differently, began to revive, and, for a time, I felt determined to forsake the foolish and live, and go in the way of understanding ; these resolutions were but momentary. But a few days after this young man was buried, the disorder prevailed in the neighborhood where I had attended the schools. There was a man lived there by the name of Jonathan Wood. He and his family were much esteemed by all who knew them. He had three daughters grown up ; the eldest of the three was married, and lived in the house with her father. Several of the young people, who either had



not been alarmed by the death of the young man in another town, or had lost the impression his death had made, thinking the disorder would not prevail among them, appointed a ball in the neighborhood on Monday evening. In the afternoon of the day, I saw Mr. Wood's two youngest daughters carried in a sleigh to the ball; the next Wednesday or Thursday his daughter that was married, died of the canker-rash. The other two were taken about the same time, and died on Saturday. Sunday afternoon, I saw the same sleigh, horses, and driver, and the two sisters, in two coffins, carried to the grave, that I saw carried to the ball the Monday before. This to me and many others, was an alarming sight; especially to see them buried. By the side of the grave stood a sorrowful father and mother, who, the day before, had seen an amiable daughter laid in the grave, near where they then stood. Now the stroke is doubled. Two amiable daughters, in the morning of life, torn from them at once, to increase the grief caused by the death of the first. These done with changes here; their house left unto them desolate, while they were bereaved of their children. While standing thus by the side of the grave, every countenance appeared solemn. One man, (Daniel Ralph,) spoke and said, "We read in the scriptures, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word shall be established; and here, (said he,) are two witnesses that prove that all men are mortal, and that life is always uncertain."

These words, connected with what was before me, were like thunder in my ears. After the two sisters were buried, the father, almost overcome, spoke to the people and said, "My friends, I give you thanks for your kindness in burying these two dead bodies." As he spake the last word, he burst into tears, which with the solemn deaths, caused a general weeping and sobbing through a large assembly, met to attend the two sisters to the grave. The mourning seemed like that when Joseph, his brethren, and the Egyptians wept over the grave of Jacob. This circumstance caused me to weep; but I felt a greater cause of weeping than this, which was my own danger; as it appeared to me that my turn would certainly come next, as I had turned a deaf ear to so many calls and warnings; and I believed, if I was cut down with that disorder, it would be just for me to die.

While returning home from the grave, how small my earthly prospects appeared! and as for prospects heavenly, I had none. That day, I made a solemn promise, that if the Lord would spare my life, I would never again rebel against his spirit, as heretofore. This promise I in some measure kept, until God manifested his pardoning mercy to me through his Son, Christ Jesus our Lord. The evening after was spent in a manner profitable to us all. My parents faithfully told us of the danger we were in, mentioning that it was altogether likely some of us before one week would be laid in the grave. This I aw-

fully feared. My father read the scriptures to us, and prayed with and for us, in a fervent and affectionate manner. My mind was greatly distressed by considering myself a sinner, justly condemned to die. Not long after this, as I was in the woods at work alone, my situation appeared to be shewn me by the spirit of truth, as I now believe. The iniquity of my heels overtook me, and I appeared full of the sins of my youth. This place was fulfilled in me, "I will reprove thee, and set thy sins in order before thee." The day appeared dark, and every thing seemed to mourn around me. This was the situation I thought myself in ; guilty before God, and guilty of crimes of the deepest dye. Every wrong ever committed, whether in thought, word, or deed, appeared before me, and things which before appeared small, now rose like mountains between me and my Creator. It appeared to me that I was a criminal brought to the bar, and proved guilty, and deserving death, without one plea in his own behalf. I said, O that I had not sinned, but I have, and now it is too late ! Notwithstanding all I had heard of Christ, I was ignorant of forgiveness through him. My situation seemed like that of a murderer, who laments that he has deprived an innocent man of life ; wishes he had not done it ; is sorry for it, and says, if I had not done it, I should now be clear ; but it is done ; the law says such shall die ; the law is just, and if justice takes place, death is my portion. So it was

with me, I saw no way that God could be just, unless I was cast off forever. I knew he was just, and would ever so remain, and this conclusion followed : I have sinned against a God that is holy, just and good ; for this I am now condemned to die, and as certain as I now exist, so certain it is that I must be lost forever ; there is no hope for me. I am gone and gone forever ; and at that time, I as much expected to be forever lost, as though a voice from heaven had then said, “ depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” This led me to say, O that I had never been born, or that I had been any thing but an accountable creature ! No one can tell the distress I felt, unless they have felt the same. While in this distressing situation, I stood on a log with my ax for the purpose of cutting it off. A thought passed through my mind to step down on the ground and pray ; then another thought arose, I am lost forever, and it is in vain to pray, and I had been taught that God would not hear sinners, and that it would be useless to pray ; however, my distress was so great that I kneeled down on the ground, but could not say one word, and after remaining some time in that position, I rose and thought of trying to work again, though it seemed in vain for one condemned to die, to do any work for himself or others.

Though I had no real peace, yet my mind seemed a little relieved from the dreadful distress it had been in. I began to think of the doc-



trine I had been taught ; “ That God had from all eternity elected some to eternal life ;” and thought if that doctrine is true, I am unavoidably safe, or in danger because God made me for that end ; and I recollected that the catechism said, “ the decrees of God are his eternal purpose, whereby for his own glory he has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.” This seemed a momentary, though not a rational relief. I thought thus : if God has designed some for salvation, and some for damnation, how can I be sentenced to die for that which God decreed I should do ? These things did not stay long with me, as they came at a time when the spirit of God shewed me that I must bear my own iniquity, unless pardoned. Soon after this, I endeavored to make my baptism, which had been forced upon me, a refuge. I thought of several people who were considered converted people, who had been sprinkled in infancy ; and though I did not believe sprinkling saved any, yet thought whether such were not more likely to be converted, than those who were not sprinkled ; and from this began to hope I might yet find mercy with God.

Not long after these things passed through my mind, I went into the woods one morning after a stick of timber ; after taking it on my shoulder to bring it to the house, as I walked along on a large log that lay above the snow, my foot slipped and I fell partly under the log, the timber fell one end on the leg and the other on the snow, and held me, so that I

found it difficult at first to rise from the situation I was then in. While in this situation, a light appeared to shine from heaven, not only into my head, but into my heart. This was something very strange to me, and what I had never experienced before. My mind seemed to rise in that light to the throne of God and the Lamb, and while thus gloriously led, what appeared to my understanding was expressed in Rev. xiv. 1. "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." The Lamb once slain appeared to my understanding, and while viewing him, I felt such love to him as I never felt to any thing earthly. My mind was calm and at peace with God through the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. The view of the Lamb on mount Sion gave me joy unspeakable and full of glory. It is not possible for me to tell how long I remained in that situation, as every thing earthly was gone from me for some time. After admiring the glory of the Lamb for some time, I began to think of the situation my body was in, and rose up to return home. Looking around me, every object was changed, and a bright glory appeared on every thing around me. All things praised God with me. As I went towards the house, this thought came into my mind, "why do I feel so different from what I did a short time past; I am unspeakably happy and shall never see trouble again." As I walked along,

these lines came into my mind, and appeared peculiarly pleasing :

*“ Come we who love the Lord,—And let our joys be known ;*

*“ Join in a song with sweet accord,—And thus surround the throne.*

*“ Let sorrows of the mind,—Be banish’d from the place ;*

*“ Religion never was design’d—To make our pleasures less.”*

I sung the words in a tune called *Little-Marlborough*, and sung them with such pleasure as was never known by me before. This thought passed through my mind : “ Surely religion was never designed to lessen our pleasures, for I never before knew real happiness. While about my work, there was a pleasure enjoyed, in viewing the works of God around me, and in meditating on the things of God and Christ. Notwithstanding all these things, I did not then think that what I had received, was regeneration, or passing from death to life. Regeneration appeared to me something else ; for regeneration had been imagined before, and I had concluded how I should feel, if it should ever be experienced by me. What I experienced this day, appeared to me something else, as it came in an unthought-of way, and was something wholly unknown to me till that day.

## CHAPTER VI.

There are certain things I then experienced, now plain in my mind, and which lead me to believe that I then experienced the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the

Holy Ghost, which are the following : 1. Whereas before this, my mind was dark, it then became light in the Lord. 'This was then my experience ; "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." I am now certain that at that time my mind was enlightened to behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus, as I had never before seen it, and it was the same in nature, as I have experienced since ; though it was small then to what it has appeared since. 'The truth of the following I then experienced, Eph. i. 18, "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." Being enlightened, I saw light, according to the words of Peter ; 1 Pet. ii. 9, "That ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." Another place of scripture was experienced as true by me : 2 Cor. iii. 18, "But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord." It is certain that at that time, a very great change took place in my mind, even into the very image and temper of him whose glory I beheld. This was done by the spirit of God, for no bad spirit could produce such a happy change, and it was surely not in my power to



produce such a great and happy change in myself.

2. That guilt, pollution, and condemnation which I had felt, more or less, for several years, was then removed, so that my mind was as clear from it all, as though I had never committed a sin. This could not be imagination, because my guilt, pollution, and condemnation was real, and the change was of course a reality. This agrees with what is written upon the subject in the New-Testament : 1 Cor. vi. 11, " And such were some of you ; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God." This washing, and being cleansed from condemnation, is mentioned and described by Paul, Titus ii. 4, 5, 6, 7, " But after the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared ; not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour ; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Such things as these cannot be the effect of imagination, but are from the spirit of truth.

3. At that time there was a new principle written on my heart, which I certainly never felt before, and though at that time I could no more describe it, than the Israelites could the manna, yet I knew the good and sweetness

of it, as they did of the manna, when they said, "What is this?" That principle I consider the law of God written in the heart, or in other words, "the love of God shed abroad in the heart, by the Holy Ghost." This is mentioned by Paul as peculiar to all who are born of God. Heb. viii. 10, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." This law is love, and comes by the Holy Ghost. Rom. v. 5, "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." It is this principle in the heart which causes men to love righteousness, and hate iniquity.

4. Another thing I remember which has been ever plain to me; that is, love to such as give an evidence that they are born of God. Before this, I considered that good men were to be respected, and did not doubt that they would be happy at last; but it was no pleasure to me to be in their company, nor did I feel any union to them till the day God shined into my heart. At that time my affections were fixed on them, as the excellent of the earth in whom was all my delight. A pious uncle of mine, used often to tell me of my need of a Saviour, which led me to avoid his company when it could be done; but the day I experienced such a change, I felt a peculiar union to him, and felt desirous to see him more than any other person on earth. This love to the saints, John mentions as an evidence of our being delivered from a state of condemna-

tion. 1 John, iii. 14, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren; he that loveth not his brother abideth in death." Paul mentions the same thing, and tells us that love to the brethren, is the evidence of being taught of God. 1 Thes. iv. 9, "But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another."

5. Another thing I realized as true that day, that was, a victory over the world. The moment the glory of God and the Lamb was manifested to me, all the glory of worldly riches, honors, and pleasures, were gone, as the light of the moon is done away by the greater light of the sun. All in the world, which is contrary to God and holiness, is summed up in three things: the lust of the flesh; the lust of the eyes; and the pride of life. These are not of the Father, and the person who delights in these three things, the love of the Father is not in him. John says, "Whosoever is born of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God." 1 John, v. 4. Where there is victory, there is no love to that we overcome. I believe there are many people who leave things that are wrong, when it would be their choice to enjoy them, were it not for the dangerous consequences which attend those things. This is not overcoming

the world. There are many people who desist from the sinful courses they once pursued, and yet they do not appear happy in the things of God and Christ; the reason is, they have retreated, and not overcome.

6. The day God shined into my heart, the glory of the world to come appeared to me as it never had before. I had often heard people tell of the world to come; but it always appeared a thing so far off, that there was but little or no encouragement to look for it; but when the spirit of God enlightened my mind, it shewed me things to come, according to the words of Paul, "Looking for that blessed hope, and glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

7. Another thing appeared plain to me. The thought of death and judgment, had always been terrible. Many times when I opened the bible and looked on the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of Matthew, my mind was so filled with horror at the description given there of the last day, that after reading a little, I would shut up the book, or turn to some other place to read. After that day, there was no terror in death, nor the judgment, for many months. Death was overcome, and there was a way to have boldness in the day of judgment. It does not now appear to me that I so much rejoiced about myself, as in the glorious things which were manifested to my understanding. Self was not the subject, but God, Christ, and the things revealed by the spirit; nor did I, for



some time, rejoice in thinking I was born again, but in the glorious things revealed to me by the spirit.

8. Another thing experienced at that time, was this ; such an understanding of the scriptures, as I had not known before. It had been my practice to read the bible some, for many years, and to commit it to memory ; but never saw a beauty in it till that day and afterwards. Though my eyes were so weak, that I could not look in the book but a few minutes, without being almost blind, yet the sweetness of its contents made me desirous to read, and it appeared to me that every place I read was the best in the whole bible. This understanding of the scriptures, given in a short time, leads me to believe that the same spirit which led the prophets and apostles to understand and write, taught me the meaning of what they have written. This agrees with the words of Christ and the apostles. Christ said, "No man knoweth the son but he to whom the father will reveal him." When Peter said, "thou art the Christ, the son of the living God," Jesus said, "Blessed art thou Simon Bar-Jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my father which is in heaven." "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures." Paul says, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God ; for they are foolishness unto him ; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." i. Cor. ii. 14. God reveals

these things to men by his spirit. "The entrance of thy word giveth light; yea it giveth understanding to the simple."

9. One thing more shall be mentioned which I then received; that is, a spirit of praise and prayer. The first thing I did was to praise God, and in this all creation joined. Praise for all I saw and enjoyed was of course, and a spirit of prayer that I might see and enjoy more, and never live as heretofore. I had often before this, prayed as the publican did, "God be merciful to me a sinner," but never knew the spirit of adoption, leading me to cry, "Abba Father."

Though all these things were wrought in my mind at once, yet I could not then distinguish them as afterwards. To bring a similitude, it appears to me like this: when a child is born, he has all the features of a man; he is a man in miniature, and is called a man-child. As he increases in stature, every part increases in proportion with his stature, till he arrives to the size of a man. So it is with those who are born of God.

Some, perhaps, who read this may say, "I cannot give such an account of being born again, as this." Perhaps they cannot, but ask them if they never felt the same principle in their hearts, and they will, if born again, say, "yes."

It will here be needful to notice, that there are a diversity of operations by the same spirit. All who are born again do not experience the same operations, though all such know

the same things, in a greater or less degree. After Christ was risen from the dead, he made himself known to his disciples in different forms, but he was the same Christ ; and the knowledge of him amounted to the same, as each one who had seen him after his resurrection could say, "the Lord is risen indeed." Should an hundred people meet from different and distant parts of the country, and all be in one place, would any one doubt of his being there, because he came from the east, while another came from the west? Surely no. Would any one doubt of his being there because he came only one mile, when another came an hundred miles? No, he would think himself as really there as the other.

The first day of experiencing this change, was the happiest day I had ever known, yea, this was the first day of knowing real peace and joy ; all beside had but the name of happiness, when compared to the joy which comes to such as believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. This day every thing appeared right. I had long thought that God hated his creatures, or at least the greater part of them. The change which at first appeared to be in my Creator, I found afterwards was in me. He had always been love, and when his spirit made the change in me, I then knew what God was. "God is love." Soon after this great change, these questions came into my mind, "*Why did I not experience this before?*" The answer was, "*Because I was not willing to receive that which made the*

*change ; the spirit of truth."* The next question was this, "*How came I to have it now?"*" The answer was, "*Because God was willing to bestow it upon me, after I had so long resisted his spirit.*" Here is neither calvinism, arminianism, nor freewillism, but the truth. So I was first taught, so I now believe and preach. God is ready to save them that believe. Christ became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him. All who looked to the brazen serpent were healed ; all who believe in Christ have eternal life. The brazen serpent did not heal them ; looking did not heal ; but God healed such as beheld the serpent of brass. Believing does not save us, but God has commanded us to believe in his Son, who is able to save them to the uttermost who come unto God through him.

## CHAPTER VII.

This change which I had experienced was for some time unknown to any but myself ; and sometimes it was my determination to keep it to myself ; thinking if it was a reality, I might enjoy it, without others knowing it, and if all my happiness should come to an end, it would be best not to let my short lived joy be known. No person can tell, unless he has felt the same, the comfort I enjoyed in secret prayer, in singing praises to God, and in reading the scriptures. Besides this, my



happiness was greatly increased by attending public worship. Every part was joy to me. Singing, praying, preaching, exhortations, &c. gave me great pleasure. Every exercise which had Christ in it, was joy to me. In the month of April, 1785, thirty years ago this month, [April, 1815,] there was a revival of religion in the south part of the town, which took place soon after the raging disorder took away the youth in such a sudden manner. In this revival, several young people professed to be converted to God. Hearing them tell what they had experienced, gave me great joy, as they spake of the same things I had experienced; this led me to hope I had passed from death to life. I reasoned thus: these converts know what I know. They have never heard what I have experienced, yet they know it. They are certainly born again, and as my experience agrees with theirs, it must be true that I am born again. They were forward in praying and speaking in small meetings; this I could not do, and on that account often thought my experience was not like theirs. Sometimes when with two or three of them, I would try to pray, but could say only a few words before my mind would be wholly shut up, which led me to think, at times, that all my religion was imaginary. Sometimes I would try to feel the same distress I had felt before the first relief came to my mind. This I could not do; as that was washed away. Sometimes this thought would pass through my mind, "I am not con-

verted right, I will put this all away, and begin again." All these resolves did not remove my love to prayer, praise, the word, saints, and public worship ; nor did they cause me to feel the spirit of bondage again to fear. Often did I wish that my experience was as clear as others appeared to me, and that I had as clear an evidence of passing from death to life as others enjoyed. At that time I thought a real christian felt as holy as an angel, and that he felt nothing in himself wrong, or unlike God. When I saw an old christian, this thought would run through my mind ; " O, that I felt as holy as you do ; if I did, my acceptance with God would be certain to me." One day, being in company with a man whom I considered a real christian, it came into my mind to ask him if he ever felt any thing wrong in his mind, or sinful, since he was converted. He at once told me he did. I then told him that it appeared to me if a man was a christian, he would feel himself entirely free from every thing wrong. He replied, " you are in a great mistake ; this I can easily prove to you." This roused all my powers, and I at once desired him to prove what he had said. He asked me if I believed Abraham was a good man. Yes. " Well, (said he,) when Abraham was about to pray for Sodom, he said, " I, who am but dust and ashes, take it upon me to speak to the Almighty." Now, said he, what can be meaner than dust and ashes ? So Abraham viewed himself. Job, said he, was doubtless a good

man, and he said, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." He said, "If I say I am perfect this also will prove me perverse." He also stated that Paul was a good man, and yet said, when he would do good, evil was present with him, and viewing himself, he exclaimed, "O, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death !"

The old man farther stated, that when a man talked of his own goodness, and that he was more holy than others, it was a certain sign of his being an hypocrite ; for one said, "God I thank thee that I am not as other men." Such say, "Stand by thyself, come not near for I am holier than thou." He further noticed that when the sun shone into the room, we could discover thousands of dusts in the sunbeams, which could not be seen in any other part of the room ; so, said he, when God shines into our hearts, we discover what had been there before, and on this account, a young convert often thinks there is more wickedness in his heart, than he ever had before ; but this is not true ; he then only sees what he has always been.

This was new doctrine to me, and encouraged me to think I had experienced that which christians knew. This conversation strengthened me so much, that I felt determined to tell him what I had experienced. He was very attentive to what I related. After hearing me through, he observed that he had for some time thought I had experienced a

change, and hoped I would persevere. This conversation served to strengthen my mind, and led me often to rejoice in hope.

This year was a year of trouble to the inhabitants of Woodstock, and several other new towns, on account of the severity of the season, and the scarcity of provision. On the 17th of April, the snow in the woods was four and half feet deep, and the 21st of May, there were large banks of snow on the north side of the hills. This was a melancholly appearance indeed ! It looked as though seed time would not come. Provisions of every kind were very scarce, and but few people had enough to last them till harvest. My father concluded we must work out by the month till after harvest, as he knew of no other way for us to live. This did not trouble me, as every thing to me was right, and my mind was reconciled to what was right, however hard it might appear. On the first of May, I went to work with Jonathan Farnsworth, who lived near my father's house. My engagement was for one month. My work was not hard on account of the happiness I enjoyed in my mind. This was the happiest month I had ever known. All the leisure time I had was spent either in reading, praying, singing, conversing on the glory of Christ, or attending meetings with the converts.

*" The world with all its pomp withdrew,  
'Twas less than nothing in my view ;  
Redeeming grace was all my theme,  
And life appeared an idle dream."*



I found a small pamphlet of hymns published by Sampson Occum ; these were upon christian experience, and peculiarly pleasing to me. I carried my hymn book in my pocket, and when at work in the field, while my oxen were resting, would read or sing my experimental hymns, which contained a constant feast. Sometimes while walking through the fields alone, and meditating on the glory to come, my desire was to be gone from earth, to be with Christ which is far better. Many times in that month, did I wish it might be my lot to leave all below. There was no terror in death to me ; it appeared the gate of endless joy ; nor did I dread to enter there. There was neither riches, honor or pleasures on earth that appeared worth my stay. Sometimes in the night, while meditating on the glory of God and Christ, my mind was so raised above things earthly, that I scarcely knew where I was. In this month, as soon as the birds began to sing in the morning, I would rise and go to a certain place in the woods near the house to pray. In that place I often enjoyed what kings and princes never knew, unless they knew the Lord of Glory. These things were not imaginary, but a reality, known in a greater or less degree by all who are born of God.

Notwithstanding the enjoyment which I had in the things taught by the spirit, oftentimes a small cloud would hide the sun of righteousness from my view, and cause me to doubt whether Christ was mine or not. If

at any time sinful thoughts were allowed ; if I omitted any particular duty, or let my mind rove from the mark, this conclusion would arise in my mind : “ I have forsaken the Lord, and now he has forsaken me.” One thing dwelt much on my mind, which was, that my experience was not so great to me as others was to them, and was often led to say, “ if I had as great an evidence as such ones, my doubts would all be gone forever.” There were two young men who professed to be converted, and who gave me a very clear evidence that they were born of God ; they often prayed and spake in public meetings. O, thought I, if my evidence was like theirs, my hope would be forever firm ! About this time, I dreamed, that an angel came to me, and said, “ you often doubt whether you have passed from death to life, and think if you were as certain of your own conversion as you are of others, you should doubt no more. I am sent to try you and the other two young men, that you may know what your situation is. You and they are to be tried by fire, and those who endure the trial are right, and those who do not will not stand.” This gave my mind a shock ; yet in my dream told the angel, my wish was to be right, and if I was not so, it was best to know it now. I dreamed that he put two sticks into the ground, and laid a pole across the top of the two, and made a fire under the pole he laid across. After doing this, he took three long pieces of bark, that would go over the pole, and each

end lie on the ground; when he had done this, he made a fire under one of the pieces which reached it and burnt it off. As it fell he said, such an one is gone, he will fall away. This was one of the young men which gave me such an evidence of being converted. After this he put a fire under the second, which was the way the other young man was to be tried. This soon burnt off, and as it fell he said, the other one would not endure long. This in my dream filled me with great trouble, as I concluded, if these two failed, there was no hope for me; and that I was gone forever. He then put the fire under the third; I stood and saw the blaze touch the bark, so that it was considerable scorched; but before it burnt, the angel threw water on, which kept it in that situation till the fire was gone out. When the fire was done, I was in my dream so affected with what had taken place, that I rose from the place where I sat, and wept much at the thought of being the only one of the three that should endure. While in this weeping situation, I dreamed that the angel came to me as I sat weeping, and putting his right hand on my shoulder, he mildly said, "*Weep not at this, the Lord has appeared for you, and will preserve you, for he has a great work for you to do in the world.*" This affected me more than all I had seen before. Being much agitated with what was said and done, I awoke, and was in the same situation that I dreamed of being in. My face was bathed in tears, and my pillow was wet with



my weeping. I thought of my dream, but concluded it could not be true as it respected the two young men or myself. I felt a calmness of mind, and every circumstance of my dream appeared solemn to me. It was not long after this, that my dream began to be fulfilled. The oldest of the two young men, began after a while to grow indifferent to the things of religion, and at last became an open opposer of the things he once recommended to others, and before one year from that, he returned like the dog to his vomit, and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire. After thus falling away, he became intemperate and a despiser of those that were good, and so remained till the year 1814, when he was taken with a fever, and in his sickness blasphemed the God of heaven, even till his latest breath. Thus he ended his wretched course, after turning from the holy commandment once delivered unto him.

The other young man after a few months, appeared to give up his hope in Christ, and so remained until he was about twenty years old. At that time there was a general reformation, and he among others was brought to rejoice in the Lord, was baptized, and in a few years after became a preacher of the everlasting gospel, and he remains to this day, in a good degree a faithful minister of Jesus Christ.



## CHAPTER VIII.

Not long after this dream, my mind was considerably exercised concerning baptism ; and in proportion as I considered myself a believer in Christ, in the same proportion I considered it my duty to be baptized after the example of Christ, and according to his express command. Being young, and not much acquainted with the subject, nor with the disputes which had been in the world, I considered that sprinkling children, and baptizing by burying believers were both right, because I knew both were done by good people. As I had been sprinkled once, it appeared to me needless to have it done again ; for if it answered the purpose designed for, it need not be repeated, and if it ought to be done again, it was of no service the first time. This subject then seemed to me as it does to many now ; a matter of indifference as to the mode or subject, allowing it is done somehow and called baptism. My ignorance of the meaning of baptism, was the cause of such a loose opinion of an express command of Jesus Christ. After thinking and conversing some upon the subject, and being by some advised to be baptized, I concluded to have some conversation with my old uncle, who had used such violence when I was sprinkled. He had many good books, was a man that read much, and preached sometimes. One day being at his house, I introduced the subject of baptism, and wished his mind upon it. He very can-

didly told me he held to *infant baptism*, and was entirely satisfied with it, and that as I had been christened it was enough, and that I might as well be contented with it, observing that when the baptists began to talk upon that it always made a stir. He also stated that if he had time he would prove to me that *infant baptism* was right, and a command of God. This pleased me much, as I was willing to believe it true, if it was in the bible. This ended the conversation for that time. After leaving him, I began to search the new-testament to see how baptism stood there. My eyes being very weak, I could read but very little; however, a circumstance occurred, about that time, which greatly assisted me. Another uncle, who first shewed me the geography, knowing the disadvantages I was under, my taste for reading, and having a particular regard for me, said he had a pair of *green-glasses*, which would help me to read with ease. He lent them to me, and I found that they were a great help, as with them I could read hours without any pain in my eyes. Those I kept till I owned a pair, and have used them to this day, and notwithstanding I have read and wrote so much for thirteen years past, my sight is now as good as it was thirty years ago.

Having this new and unexpected help, I searched the new-testament carefully, and found *infant baptism* was not there. Being convinced that believer's baptism was the only one mentioned in the bible, I went again to

converse with my uncle. After some conversation, I asked him where the place was that spake of *infant baptism*. He said he did not then remember. I desired him to see if he could find it. He then said it came in the room of circumcision. Then I asked him to tell me where the bible said so. He replied, Mr. Flavel said so, and that it was not best for him or me to contradict so great and good a man as Mr. Flavel. I then asked him if Mr. Flavel was the bible; he said no, but he was as likely to know what was right as any man; for he did not think such a good man would say so, if he did not know certain. I then told him that *infant baptism* was not in the new-testament, and that I did not believe it was in the bible, for if it was, he would at least know one place. He said he could prove it, if he had time. This he had till he died, but never told me where to read it in the bible.

Through the summer, my mind was calm, and the world with all its pomp withdrew. One thing which caused me to doubt was this: I had often heard old professors of religion tell about a "*law work*"; this I had never experienced, and thought from this, that no one was converted to God unless he had experienced the *law work*. They said a person must first be under the terrors of the law, and be slain by the law before they could be saved by Christ. One old minister said a person could not be converted, unless he was under the law at least six weeks! I once heard Dr. Samuel



Shepherd say, "that such preachers thought a person must be hammered upon Moses' anvil, to fit them to be filed off by the gospel." This law work is something that never takes place ; what some call the law work, is the work of that gospel that comes not in word only, but also in power, the Holy Ghost, and much assurance. The spirit reproves the world of sin, of righteousness, and judgment. It was the spirit of truth, which caused Peter's hearers to be pricked in the heart, and not the law of Moses. Men who preach that a sinner is as dead as Lazarus in the grave, are inconsistent in saying such must be slain by the law ; as it would be difficult to shew how a dead man could be slain. What long time had Peter's hearers, the jailor, or Paul, to experience this long law work ? The fact is, if a person loves the brethren, he has passed from death to life, and John says, we know it is so.

Another thing greatly troubled me, and prevented my submitting to baptism. I had often heard Christian people tell of God's *justice* ; and that no person could be converted to God, unless he had viewed the glory of God's justice. This I believed, but did not know as my mind had been particularly led into that ; though before I ever found any peace, it appeared to me just to be cast off forever, for my sins against a God who was just in all his ways. One day, while walking through a piece of ground where the trees stood thick on each side of the road, my mind was remarkably solemn, while viewing the



works of God around me. Amidst this solemnity, this thought came into my mind : O, that I could see God's justice, as I have often heard christians say they have seen it ! In an instant it appeared to me that a light from heaven shone around me, and that justice was manifested to my understanding ; which I then thought meant the righteousness of God in all his dealings with the children of men. It was then plain to me, that if men were saved or lost, God would be just ; and I then loved God because he was righteous in all things. This passed through my mind : " If all the saints and angels praise God for his love, I shall praise him for his justice." O what glory appeared in justice ! It appeared to me thus, " if I had not been justly condemned, it would have been impossible for me to have been justified, as one who deserved to die ; and God has set forth his son to be a propitiation, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." There is one thing needful to be mentioned here, that is, a principle advanced by some, that a man cannot be saved, unless he is willing to be damned. This is false doctrine, and ought never to be credited by any man. No man can see the propriety of being forgiven, unless he sees it just for him to be punished according to his crime ; for a man to see he justly deserves to die, is one thing ; to be willing to have the sentence of death executed on him is another. If a man is willing to be damned, he must be willing to remain

in a state of condemnation, for no others can be lost. When I hear such doctrine as this advanced, I think that such men know they preach damnable doctrine, for a living, and that they mean to have the consent of their hearers before they do it.

This manifestation of justice to my mind was enough to remove every objection out of the way, as to being baptized ; but still I shrunk back, and kept delaying a known duty, till in a few months, the beauty of the command disappeared, and by disobedience I lost, by little and little, the sweet enjoyment, which is the certain fruit of obedience, and in the course of about six months, was better pleased with my situation, than though I had been baptized. Neglecting this duty, led me to neglect other things commanded ; as these things were neglected, my evidence of being purged from my old sins lessened, until at last I concluded that the change experienced, was not such as made me an heir of God and joint heir with Christ. Should any one ever read this, who has known the forgivness of sins, and peace with God ; be intreated to follow Christ in baptism, and in all things commanded ; so you will be kept from the evil in the world, live near to God, have peace in your own minds, and be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

## CHAPTER IX.

Though I had, before one year, lost much of the enjoyment which was so great for several months, yet I never after went into those sinful courses which many of my age often are found in. The people called saints, I ever after considered the excellent of the earth. When I heard good preaching, it did me good, fed my mind, and I spared no pains to hear those preachers who were in the spirit of the gospel. The winter after I had this change, two baptist preachers came to preach at the house of Jabez Cottle, Esq. in Woodstock, and a young man, an exhorter, by the name of Joshua Smith. The name of one preacher was Daniel Hibbard, and the other Thomas Baldwin. The last named now lives in Boston, and is styled Rev. Thomas Baldwin, D. D. and wears a dress something like that worn by the ancient *pagan priests*, called a surplice. He was then called Elder Baldwin. I was exceedingly charmed with the man ; he was then about thirty years old ; was a well built man, plainly dressed ; and I believe felt the glory of God's grace in his heart. Elder Hibbard began the meeting by prayer and singing, and after singing, he said in my hearing, " Brother Baldwin I believe you must preach, for I do not feel my mind free." Soon after he spake, Elder Baldwin, came forward to the place where the preacher was to stand, and took up the bible and read for his text these words : Heb. xi. 17, "*By*



*faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac ; and he that had received the promises, offered up his only begotten son."* Every thing about the man pleased me. His countenance was pleasant, his voice melodious, and his subject remarkably engaging. When he described the conduct of Abraham, in offering up his son, I now remember some of the words he said : " Did he, said the preacher, like David, go crying up to the house top, saying O my son Isaac, would to God I had died for thee. No, no, my brethren, but without a murmuring thought, or word, prepared the altar, the wood, and bound on his son, determined to obey his God, though it should take from him his son, his beloved Isaac !" I then said, never man spake like this man. Never before did I feel so strong an union to any man as to that man, and that union has continued to this day, and I believe will, till death parts us ; and I yet hope to meet him among the redeemed, and set down with him in the kingdom, with Abraham, and Isaac too, and go no more out. When duty called me to part from him, about eleven years ago, it was the hardest parting I ever knew before. In the afternoon, Elder Hibbard preached from Psal. cxxvi. 3, "*The Lord has done great things for us, whereof we are glad.*" He preached well, but not like the other man. After he had done, the young man delivered a very solemn exhortation ; and though I had almost concluded that my hope in Christ was



not to be depended on, yet this was a good day to me.

Having neglected to obey Christ in being baptized, and in consequence of this, neglected other things required of a christian, my mind began to cleave to the earth by little and little, until I was quite destitute of heavenly enjoyment, though not of the knowledge of things heavenly. My being naturally of a very bashful turn, kept me from many things which others ran into ; and in addition to this, I felt an aversion to company ; and many times, when young people came to my father's house, I would retire to the barn, and stay there in the cold, rather than be with them. One reason of this was, I concluded that I had not common sense, or not sense like other young people ; and that by keeping from them, they would not know how great a fool I was.

The summer I entered my eighteenth year, the knowledge of heavenly things received, was so much, as to keep me from a sinful course of life ; and an idea of my own importance, which was beyond what it ought to be, fired me with zeal to make myself respected among those of my age, and others of my acquaintance.

This summer I worked for my uncle, who was the cause of my being sprinkled. My chief employment was hewing timber. While in his employ, I had an opportunity to peruse many of his books, which was afterwards of great advantage to me. It was here that I

first heard of such a science as *logic* ; and this was by mere accident. A baptist preacher, by the name of Joel Butler, was at my uncle's house, and just before he went out at the door, he said to my uncle, "Have you Watts' logic?" He answered, yes. "Will you lend it to me a few days?" My uncle said he would, and handed it to him. This seemed to me a strange title for a book, and I enquired the meaning of it. — After it was returned, my uncle gave me liberty to read it at his house, but would not let me carry it away. I read it every opportunity, for two or three years, when at his house. He shewed me another book called, "Watts' supplement to his logic." This book was the greatest help to me, in laying a foundation for reading, and acquiring knowledge afterwards, of any other book I had ever read. In one chapter was contained, rules for helping the memory, and this I greatly needed, as it appeared to me that no one had a memory so weak as mine. It was ever difficult for me, before this time, to remember any story, so as to tell it again intelligibly ; and often, when attempting to relate any thing, some one would interrupt me by saying, "If I were in your place, I would never tell any thing till I could remember it, so as to let people know what I meant."

Through this summer, my leisure hours were improved in reading all the useful books I could find. Whenever I went into any house, it was my practice to ask the privilege of reading any book or books in sight. Know-

ing my ignorance, and thinking my natural abilities were small, and feeling the disadvantages of such inferiority, I was determined to rise above it if possible. Being in a new country, where there was no advantage of a school, nor many to teach me; being poor, and obliged to labor constantly; it was hard gaining knowledge, barely by such dead teachers as books, which spake only to my eyes, and never repeated their meaning in other words. It was this summer, that I first heard of such a science as *rhetoric*. This I read with as much eagerness as an hungry man would eat, after long abstinence. Looks, tones, gestures, motions of the head, hands and body, cadence, emphasis, &c. were strange things to me, as described in a book; and I concluded there were, or had been, men in the world, who knew more than ever entered into my mind, or ever would. At this time, all I wanted, was to be freed from labor with my hands, and have the privilege of acquiring such knowledge, as would make me useful to myself and others; this I wished, but never expected. This year, however, was almost the last year of hard labor with my hands. In the latter part of the summer, after entering my eighteenth year, by overdoing, I had an uncommon faintness at my stomach, caused partly by hard work, and partly by reading, and thinking so intensely upon what I had read, in order to retain it in memory. For some time I did not labor any, though my book was either in my pocket, or open



before my eyes. My father thought reading hurt me more than hard work, and told me to desist for a while ; but this was an hard saying, and lest he should be displeased, I frequently went into the wilderness, and there spent the day in reading such books as were in my possession. In September, my father proposed to me, to take a journey to Connecticut ; thinking a change of climate, and the salt water, would help me. This I did, and after six weeks, returned home, feeling some relieved of that faintness which I had, for several weeks been exercised with. Soon after my return, Jabez Cottle, Esq. who had been a peculiar friend to me, proposed to me to take a school one month, as they wished the school to continue longer than their teacher could attend. The thing was proposed to my father ; whose only objection was, that I had no learning. My friend Cottle told him I could teach the children A, B, C, and ab, and that was the chief the children needed to be taught. Under every disadvantage, to appearance, I entered the school-house on Monday morning, and soon there gathered around me a little company of scholars, who began to call me master ; though I was almost as unfit for an instructor as those who came to be taught ; however, I was determined to do the best in my power, knowing an angel could do no better. Without any doubt my appearance as a school-master was rather awkward, for I could write but poorly, and did not understand the rules of reading ; and, to save



my life, could enumerate only three figures. My wages was four dollars for the month, to be paid in wheat, at five shillings per bushel, and boarded at the expence of the district.

My scholars, and their parents, appeared contented with their young teacher ; and it so happened that there was not one of them that knew so much as I did ; and as they could gain in knowledge, they spake well of their master, and he, in return, encouraged them to proceed. At first I was afraid they would overtake me, but soon found I could learn faster than my scholars. This month I improved, when out of school, in gaining all the useful knowledge possible for me to gain. It was my practice to rise early, and commit to memory a lesson from "Fenner's grammar." My time of study was from day light till five minutes before nine o'clock ; that time it took me to go to the school-house. My intermission was one hour. Part of this time was employed in reading my lesson. At four o'clock in the afternoon, my school was out ; so that I had from that time till nine o'clock, to pursue my study, which time I daily improved. Many times I lay hours, in fixing my lesson in my memory, and endeavoring to find the meaning of what the writer said.

When other young people were spending their time in amusements to no profit, mine was taken up in gaining something that might be useful in a future day. They called me a fool ; this did not trouble me, as their opinion was only what was my own ; and a fool ap-

peared to me, such a disagreeable being, that it was my determination, if possible, to get rid of that which made me one, which was ignorance and folly. I thought that possessing what wise men possessed, would make me wise, and this I greatly desired.

This month of attending school, was the first part of my public life. At the close of the month, I retired, not then ever expecting to attend to that kind of business again. One or two weeks of the time, I boarded with my friend Cottle, who was considered a man of good learning ; he taught me how to enumerate, and told me every third figure was hundreds ; this looked plain, and I considered it an acquirement, not to be parted with on any account. My conduct in the school, gave general satisfaction to the children and their parents. The children hoped I should teach them again the next spring. So the business ended for that year, and we parted in peace. As the cold weather came on, my health became as good as ever, and I engaged anew in the work on the farm, without paying much attention to the things of religion for some time. The winter of my eighteenth year, my father allowed me ten days to attend school to learn arithmetic, in which time I obtained some knowledge of the science. This was the last time of my attending school, and all attained to that time was but little. In the spring, the same complaint returned upon me again, that I had the year before ; which was caused chiefly by too much singing, reading, and in-

tense thinking upon what I read. My father seeing my situation, told me if I could get into any business that was not too hard, that it would be best, as he and my other two brothers could carry on the farm. In consequence of this, I undertook a school for six months. This brought me into almost the whole I wished for. There was an opportunity for me to earn something, and as much time to read as my strength would bear. My boarding place was near my uncle's house, who owned so many good and useful books. He allowed me to read any of them at his house. My daily practice was to eat my breakfast about six o'clock, and then go to his house and read till fifteen minutes before school time. In the afternoon, I generally read some book at home, and in the evening, spent some time with my friends to unbend my mind. This summer I committed almost the whole of Webster's grammar to memory; this being the book then used in the school. As I first learnt to read in Dilworth's spelling-book, and learnt his grammar first, there was a constant difficulty attending me, which was to forget the old fashion of reading, while learning Webster's mode of pronunciation. This difficulty I surmounted after a length of time. At the close of six months, I thought myself considerably well qualified to teach others in that new country, and proposed teaching larger scholars than those who attended through the summer, if there was any place where it might be done. Late in the



season, not far from December, when in my nineteenth year, a school was offered me in a corner of Hartland, joining Woodstock, where my wages would be higher. There was an objection to that place, on account of the inconvenience of the house ; it being a new, cold dwelling-house. Notwithstanding this, I engaged to teach three months, to begin the first of December. The following is a correct description of my school-room. All the covering upon the frame was hemlock boards, featheredged, as it is termed, and nailed on. There were no clapboards on the outside, nor plastering or sealing upon the inside. The chamber floor consisted of loose boards, laid down, being neither jointed nor nailed. The lower floor was the same, and there was not one window in the room. All the light, excepting what came through between the boards, was as follows : there were two or three holes cut through the boards of the side, and end of the house. These were filled up with a newspaper, Spooner's Vermont Journal, which was oiled to let the light through, and fixed into thin strips of wood, and made fast. These were all the windows we had. Sometimes the boys would by accident make a large hole through them with their elbows. Often when I first came into the room, I could discern but little. In this cold, dark, inconvenient place, I spent three months, instructing others according to the best of my abilities. This winter, by reading too much, my eyes were in such a situation, that with my



glasses, I could not read much, only as I kept a particular kind of eye-water to use several times in a day, as the only remedy ; and to add to all my trouble respecting my eyes, the borrowed glasses I had used were called for, so that my time of reading seemed then to be over. Soon after this, it was told me that such glasses were to be sold at Windsor, about ten miles from where I kept my school. Being determined not to be hindred from reading, if there was any remedy for my eyes, I engaged an horse, took one bushel of wheat in a bag, and after midnight, and very cold, I set out for Windsor.

The snow was deep, the path poor, the road very hilly, and the weather cold. Sometimes I rode and sometimes walked, to prevent suffering by the severity of the weather. Just as the day-light appeared, I arrived at the store where it was said green glasses were kept. I knocked at the door of the store several times ; at last a man in the chamber, half awake, cried out, "Who is there?" I replied, "a friend." He spake out again, "What do you want this time of night?" I told him, "a pair of spectacles." "We have none," said he. This, at once, sunk my raised expectation. I then asked him if he had any *green spectacles*. "Yes," said he, "but it is too cold to get up now." I told him my necessity, and how far I had come in the night, and that he must let me have them. He was quite mad at my urgency, but finally came down with a candle, shewed me the

glasses, and told me the price, which was five shillings. I asked him if he would take some wheat for them. "Yes," said he, and quite mad about it. "What do you give per bushel?" "Five shillings," said he. All my desire, for that time, was granted. I took the bag off the horse, and brought it in, good measure, which he accepted. I bid him farewell, and he, in return said he hoped, if I ever wanted any more, I would stay for them till day-light. I rode to my boarding-house about breakfast time, and by nine o'clock, was ready to attend my school as usual. All my expence and trouble was but little, compared to the glasses, which enabled me to attend to my favorite business of reading. These glasses I kept, and used constantly, until one year after my first residence in Portsmouth, in the year 1802. Those who have strong eyes, and every advantage for an education, know but a little of the disadvantages people are under, in my situation at that time.

## CHAPTER X.

When about eighteen years old, I borrowed *Entick's dictionary* of my uncle, and carried it in my pocket wherever I went for one year, that whenever a new word was mentioned, I might know the meaning; for Dr. Watts had told me, in his book, "that the time to know the meaning of a word, is when you first hear it." My determination

was to attend strictly to that rule. When I heard a preacher, my practice was to carry my pen and ink, and set down every word the preacher used, I did not understand, and when at home, write from the dictionary, the meaning against the word, on my paper. Paying close attention to the words spoken, caused me better to retain the subject spoken upon ; and soon after taking down words from the preacher, I began to write down his text, and propositions ; in this way, in a few months, I was able to retain the text and particulars, without my pen, and at last to retain the greater part of the sermon.

From this small beginning, my memory gained to that degree, that for many years, I have generally been able to retain a sermon, so as to repeat the principle part, after hearing it. Before I entered upon this method, it appeared to me that no person had a poorer memory than mine. Watts' supplement of logic, mentioned this as a way to improve the memory, and it was my determination to know if he told the truth about the memory. These things are mentioned to encourage young people to persevere, even when they have not the fairest prospects before them. It was my practice through the winter, when attending this school, to improve all the time excepting school hours, in gaining useful knowledge, though under many embarrassments ; none of which ever in the least, moved me from the pursuit of useful knowledge.



In the course of this winter, when in my nineteenth year, my mind was exercised upon the same things which appeared to me so glorious the summer after my conversion ; and my affections seemed gradually to be fixed upon the things of God and Christ, superior to all things earthly. They appeared to me the best, but I thought they were forfeited by my wandering so far from God ; and concluded, that if the enjoyment was ever restored, a great share of punishment must first be inflicted on me. At one time the words of Jeremiah were peculiarly comforting and encouraging to me. "Go and proclaim these words towards the north, and say, return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you ; for I am merciful saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger forever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to strangers under every green tree ; and ye have not obeyed my voice saith the Lord." Jer. iii, 12, 13. These words encouraged me to confess, forsake, and hope to find mercy. Through this winter I conversed with experienced christians, read the scripture some, and constantly prayed with my scholars, and felt determined in future to walk in newness of life.

Much of the time there was a great solemnity on my mind, and things eternal appeared worth pursuing. At this time some of the people who belonged to the *baptist church*,



mentioned to me, that they thought I should in some future day be called to preach the gospel of Christ. There was at that time, nothing more foreign from me, as I considered myself destitute of every qualification needful for such an important and glorious work. In the spring, after finishing my school, I returned to my father's house, with a determination to attend to my former employment, laboring on the farm, and the carpenter's business, in which I greatly delighted. The log-house we built at first, began to decay, and we needed another, and it was my determination to build a new framed house. We all labored hard through the summer, in clearing our land of timber and making preparations for building an house the next year. Late in the fall, we cut logs for boards, and piled them up, in order to carry them to the mill in the winter. As soon as the snow fell so as to make good sledding, I began to carry them to the mill, which was about three miles.

I continued in the work, carrying about one each day, till I had landed sixty. There was scarcely any weather that prevented my going every day. The following was my dress through the winter : A checked woollen shirt, after the Connecticut fashion ; woollen pantaloons, as the cloth came out of the loom, without being fullled at all ; a waistcoat and frock of the same ; woollen stockings, and what we called buskins tied over my shoes, and a pair of mittens, which I seldom wore. This was my winter dress ; without any great coat or

gurtout, a kind of garment I never owned till the winter before I was twenty-one years old.

Soon after my sledding work was over, the season for making sugar came on, which we improved to good advantage. As soon as this work was over, before we could work on the land, my father and two brothers began to get the timber for the house, which I hewed the whole of, while they prepared it for hewing. To make our boards hold out, I went evenings after work to the saw-mill, two or three nights in the week, and set up through the whole night, to saw the logs I had carried to the mill, and so saved one quarter of the whole. This was hard work, but was the best we could do at that time. By the time the ground was settled, we had our sugar made, timber hewed, and boards sawed ready to put on to the frame, as soon as it was raised, and some nails paid for besides. In the time of clearing, ploughing, &c. I worked with oxen, plough and harrow, for my uncle, who was a carpenter, and did enough to pay him for framing the building, with what we expected to help him. Every thing at this time appeared prosperous, and I concluded my future business would be to work on the farm, on timber, in hewing and framing it, with many other things equally imaginary. After planting, we got the timber together on the chosen spot, where the house was to be built. The last stick was brought on Saturday afternoon, and on Monday we were to begin to frame the house. I had labored for several months be-

yond a medium, and about this time to a great extreme. On Sunday, I went to meeting and returned as usual. In the evening, a young man of my acquaintance, came to see me, and we sat some distance from the house in open air, till about ten o'clock, without a coat of any kind. The evening was foggy, and sitting there I took a violent cold, and the next morning, by the time the master workman and others came to frame the house, the pain in my head was so violent, that I was hardly able to go where they were at work.

In the afternoon, I went out and endeavored to work, but was obliged to return. The pain in my head was so severe, that the night seemed long and tedious, and part of the time I was in a kind of delirium, and imagined some person was drawing the sills and plates of the house through my head. The next day, a physician was sent for, as it was thought a fever would be the consequence of my cold. The physician took considerable blood from me, which greatly relieved the pain in my head. Every other day, my head was easy, and though not confined to the bed, nor wholly to the house, yet I was unable to do any work, and the only food I could eat was milk boiled and thickened with flour. I remained in this situation about fifteen days, and was so well as to go out, but not able to work. This seemed to be against all my worldly plans, and as I thought, much to my disadvantage. As soon as I was able to read, my attention was turned to the bible, and a

friend of mine told me of a book called *Cane's quotation bible*, and lent me the same, having shewed me the meaning of the quotations. This was the first of my knowing there was such a book in the world.

My father told me one day, that he thought it best for me to give up the idea of trying to help him, as it appeared to him that I had some other business to do besides laboring with my hands ; and also said he did not think I should be able to do any more work that summer. At this time, having in some measure given up my earthly prospects, my mind seemed uncommonly fixed on the scriptures, as a treasure to be desired. What he said deeply impressed my mind, as I could not tell what he meant ; but rather concluded he thought I might not live long. He advised me to get a school again, and told me I might have all my wages. With this advice, I engaged a school at the house where I first began in that business, and attended it till October, improving all my leisure hours in reading the quotation bible, which I carried in my pocket one year, instead of the dictionary. This was a solemn summer to me, as it appeared to me that all my earthly prospects were cut off, and I could not tell why it was so. Sometimes it appeared to me as a judgment for leaving my first love ; sometimes it was to give me a time to prepare for death ; and at other times thought it might be that some other business was laid out for me in the world, especially when so many frequent-



ly told me, they expected one day to see me a preacher of the gospel ; and when, in my twentieth year, I sometimes thought whether this might not be my duty, particularly when my mind was so lead to search and understand the scriptures. One thing my mind was fixed upon, which was, never to try to preach, unless I had an evidence that the God of Heaven called me to the work. I also thought it best to know the scriptures, so that if I should ever be called to preach, I might in some measure be qualified to obey.

At the time my school was closed, my father and mother were gone to Lyme, in Connecticut, to visit their friends. I stayed at my father's house some time, waiting for their return. As they tarried longer than they calculated when they left home, I concluded to journey to Connecticut, and spend the winter there, if I could find a school. One cause of this conclusion was, I had sometimes in that summer and fall, felt a desire to speak of the things of the scriptures in<sup>a</sup> a public assembly ; but being where I was brought up, it was an hard place to begin. I also thought it would be a less cross to speak among strangers ; this, with the hope of getting a school, encouraged, or caused me to undertake the journey. It was about two hundred miles to Lyme, where I intended to go on foot, and but little money to help me along. I took some food in my pack, and my bible and spelling-book. This was about all my property at that time, not having even a great

coat, let the weather be ever so tedious, or the storm ever so violent. The second day in the afternoon, it rained, but I pursued my journey.

When within about one mile of Walpole meeting-house, in Newhampshire, I met my father and mother returning home from their journey. They were surprised at meeting me there, and I glad to see them. My father asked me what I meant by being there, and where I was going, what my intentions and prospects were, &c. I told him my school was out in Woodstock, that I was tired of staying there to earn so little, and thought a journey to the sea would be for my health; and that I thought of getting a school in some small place, by which I might be able to get some clothes, and other things I needed. They were both very much affected at my situation, as a stranger and poor, not knowing what might befall me; but confiding in my honesty, and faithfulness, they made no objections to my proceeding on the intended journey. My father told me he could not let me have any money, as he had only enough to get home with. I told him that there would be no difficulty in getting through my journey. They gave me some cakes, which they could spare, told me to behave well wherever I went; hoped I should do well; wept not a little at parting with me, and bid me farewell. Thus we parted, in the rain, and I never heard from them, nor they from me, till the latter part of the next March.

## CHAPTER XI.

After parting with my parents, I walked to the first public house, stood by the fire and dried my clothes, eat some of my cold victuals, and travelled till night, and was then about sixty miles from my father's house. The third day, towards night, two young men in a two horse waggon, bound to Lebanon, overtook me ; I asked them if they could give me a ride, as I had no money to pay them. One of them said, "jump into the waggon." This opportunity I gladly embraced, and they carried me about forty miles each day. Saturday, about sun-down, we arrived at Springfield, Mass. where they were to tarry till Monday. They told me if I would stay till Monday they would carry me to Bolton, which was within a few miles of where I was acquainted. This proposal I accepted, and stayed at the tavern, living upon cold food from my pack, with cool water from the well.

Sunday afternoon, I went to meeting, and heard a man preach, called Dr. Howard. As I had been brought up in the woods, every thing in such a great town as Springfield attracted my attention ; particularly things under the name of religion. Being a stranger, I went into the gallery, opposite to the preacher, where I could see and hear. The first thing that drew my attention was the meeting-house, which was adorned beyond what I had ever seen in the log meeting-houses in Vermont. It was solemn to me, as I was told it



was the house of God. The next thing I noticed was the dress of the people, particularly the young men, who were in costly array, compared to my clothing. The third *object* which set me to *staring* was the minister, who made such an appearance as I had never before seen. In the first place, he had a *long, black, outside garment* on, with a broad belt of the same round his waist. The sleeves I then thought, were as wide as the *meal bags* used in Vermont. It then seemed strange to me that he should have such great sleeves, unless his arms were so stiff that he could not wear such as were near the size of his arms. Next he had something fastened under his chin, which then appeared to me like what the children in Connecticut used to wear, when they were cutting their teeth, called a BIBB. Why he wore it was unknown to me. In addition to this, he had on his head, what Dr. Baldwin used to call a *folio wig*. This was very large, white and powdered; or as I then thought, covered over with flour. From all this pompous appearance, I supposed much divinity and good matter was contained in the head, the wig contained. My mind was serious, and searching for truth, not knowing the tricks and hypocrisy which has been played upon the people by men in such a garb as this. When he read his psalm, it was in a cold, dull, lifeless manner. When he prayed, his prayer was as long as a Pharisee's prayer, if I mistake not. My legs, head and heart were all uneasy before he had done. At length he closed,



and all the people took their seats. After singing; instead of taking the bible, as I expected, he took a small quarto book and laid it open upon his cushion, saying with a moderate tone of voice, with his eyes on his book, "The portion of God's holy word proposed for your sincere meditation and reflection, is recorded in James iii. 17. "But the wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." He said a few things about wisdom in a cold, lifeless manner, and then said, a wise man is so, and so; and then on the other hand, an unwise man was the opposite of all these good things which the wise man had. As I understood him, a good citizen was as good a christian as he knew. He seemed to make his wise man out of nothing. On the whole, his sermon was flat as the canvas, and cold as the marble; and I was glad when he said, "Amen: Let us pray." As there was nothing impressive in the discourse coldly read to the people, so it made no impression on the people, and we were all dismissed to go where we pleased.

On Monday morning, we set off early on our journey, I arrived at Bolton, and went to the house of Mr. Atherton, son of the old man, who lived where I heard Elder Grow preach in the orchard some years before. He and his family received me kindly, for the sake of my father and mother, who had left their house a few days before. They bid me welcome to

their house so long as I choose to tarry with them. At this time my mind was very serious, and those things which please the youth in general, had no pleasure in them for me. I made it my constant practice to read my bible, watch my thoughts, words, and actions, and pray for instruction, wisdom, preservation, and the duty required of me in all things, and conversing at times with the family and others upon things of religion, which then were to me, of all things the most important. My appearance, and manner of life drew the attention of many in the neighborhood; of old and young, who in my short stay at Mr. Atherton's house, came to see me and hear my conversation. At that time, and in that place, it was considered a strange thing for a person of my age to talk of religion, and manifest an aversion to the course of youth in general. At that time the *baptists* held their meeting at the same house where they met when I was twelve years old. There was one man who improved among them, by the name of Victorious Smith, and another, a deacon, who improved some, and wished to be a preacher.

On the first day of the week, I went with the family to the meeting, hoping to hear something calculated to edify and instruct. Mr. Smith undertook to preach in the forenoon. He was a man of great moderation as to words, or rather slow of speech, and a slow tongue. After the usual form of singing and praying, he stood up and read for his text the following words; Acts xx. 8. "*And there were*

many lights in the upper chamber where they were gathered together." I wondered why he took such a text to preach from, and was at a loss what he would do with it, besides shewing that Paul did not preach in a dark room, though he preached in the night. The man discovered some invention, which was peculiar to himself. He did not first divide his text into propositions, but mentioned one at a time. *First*, he said he should prove that the house was three stories high ; though it was but one house. He said that it was evident the house was three stories high, because Eutychus fell down from the third loft ; this statement I doubted, and still doubt ; for a loft signifies rooms on high, and if there were three lofts, there must be one room on the ground. Having thus proved that the house was three stories high, and yet but one house, he stated, *secondly*, that Noah's ark was three stories high, and yet but one ark. This proposition took me from Troas where Paul preached, to mount Arrarat, where the ark rested. He gave some description of the ark ; told us that the beasts were in the first story, the birds in the second, and Noah and his family in the third. Next he called our attention to, 1 John v. 7, "For there are *three* that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." Having read this text, he stated, *thirdly*, that there were three persons in the Godhead, and yet but one God. The man discovered some ingenuity in his discourse, as he brought such



things to prove the doctrine called the trinity, as perhaps were never brought before nor since. At that time I did not know that such a doctrine was ever disputed, and of course thought he proved it very well. As there is no scripture for such a doctrine as this, that three persons are one person, the lighted chamber where Paul preached, and Noah's ark are as much proof of it, as any other text in the bible ; and 1 Chron. i. 1, "Adam, Sheth, Enos," is as much proof of it as what he, or any other man, can bring from the bible. The people sat very contented to hear the *trinity* illustrated from the supposed three storied house, Noah's ark, and 1 John, v. 7. Some, after meeting, told me they did not see into the subject.

One remark upon this kind of preaching. Some men, when they speak upon the scripture, instead of telling people what one or more verses mean, get their subject first, and then search for some passage of scripture, as a bowl in which they may hand the subject to the people. One preacher had it in his mind to tell an assembly that the law of God was once obeyed by Adam, disobeyed by his children, and obeyed by Christ. When he got into the meeting-house, he forgot the text he meant to read, though he remembered the subject. Being a little confused at the loss of his text, he turned his bible over to find some words that would agree with his subject, and in turning over his bible came to these words, "*That was, and is not, and yet is.*"



This seemed exactly to agree with his subject, and without looking at the connexion, he read it, and preached to the general satisfaction of those who heard him. After he had done, another preacher rose, and told the people, that they had heard a good and important subject, which he hoped they would attend to ; but, said he, you have not heard the meaning of the text ; for that which was, and is not, and yet is, came out of the bottomless pit, and will go into perdition ; but, said he, the law of God will not go there. The preacher was much mortified, and apologized by telling them he had forgotten his other text, &c. The other man, to comfort him, told him privately, that he hoped in future he would find his text first, and then find the subject in it ; in this way he would always have the right text.

In the afternoon, I heard the deacon endeavor to preach. It was said that he was the only man in all that part of the country, that thought he had a public gift. His text was this : Eccles. iii. 1, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." Solomon in the seven following verses mentions a time for twenty-eight things to be done. The deacon, to illustrate the subject in his text, undertook to explain upon these twenty-eight particulars, and what he said upon some of them, was sufficient to make any modest woman blush behind her ears, if such a thing is possible. I held my head down, till he had done.

Some thought me drowsy, but I hardly think Eutychus could have slept under such a discourse. It was the worst I ever heard. A man of sense would have been ashamed to deliver such a discourse to a score of idiots in a *pig's pen*. After meeting I asked some of the people, how they could put up with such preaching ; they said it was as good as they generally were fed with. These two men almost discouraged me from ever thinking to speak in public, if my performances should ever appear to others as theirs appeared to me.

So the meeting ended, and we returned home ; and though I was in the habit of being sober, yet these two discourses had such an effect on me, that it was with difficulty that I could talk seriously about such kind of time preaching as I heard in the afternoon.

## CHAPTER XII.

In the time of my stay at Mr. Atherton's, in Bolton, I made enquiry for a school, but found none. While there it was said, that at a place called *Hartford five miles*, about ten miles east of the city, the people were in want of a school-master, where they were chiefly baptists. Hearing of this place, I went to see the minister, Elder Christopher Minor, whom I had seen when young. I told him who I was, and my business. He was glad to see me, as he had, in Lyme, been well ac-

quainted with my father and mother. He and two more were appointed a school committee ; they met and examined me as to my knowledge of reading, arithmetic, and writing, with which they were satisfied, and told me they had always given five dollars per month, and boarded the man themselves, and that if I would undertake for that, they would engage me for three months, beginning the first Monday in December. This proposal I readily complied with, thinking myself well off to be boarded, and paid in the winter, five dollars per month. This was about the first of November. I concluded to improve this month in visiting my friends in Lyme, where I had been brought up ; and on Saturday morning set out for Lyme.

I travelled on foot till towards night, which brought me to a town called Marlborough, not far from Colchester. Travelling along, I came up with a middle aged man, driving his team. He appeared serious, and coming near, I asked him how far it was to the meeting-house. He told me. Next I asked him who preached in it. He readily told me, and then said it was not common for those of my age to enquire about such things, as the minds of young people were generally most fixed on things of a trifling nature. I told him that was too common, and that my mind was once in the state of other young people, but that I did not esteem them now, having found a more substantial good. As I uttered these words, he stared at me, and said, "Do you

not esteem the pleasures of this world?" I was a little started at first, but soon replied, I have found something better than this world affords. He then asked me from whence I came, where bound, my name, where I expected to stay that night, &c. I answered all the parts of his questions, excepting where to tarry that night. He then invited me to his house to stay till morning. I accepted his invitation and went home with him. His wife and children were very serious, and treated me well. We had, in the evening, religious conversation; he asked me to sing some hymns, and pray, which I did. My improvement among them, much affected the young people, who I suppose, never heard any one pray, who was so young. In the morning, the man asked me to go to the meeting which he attended, telling me a young man was to preach that day. His name was Kellog, and I understand he is now settled in Hebron, a town near Marlborough.

The text he spake, or read from, was this: Matth. xvi. 26, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" He said he should attend to three things contained in the text. 1. *Describe the nature and importance of the soul.* 2. *Shew that men were in danger of losing their souls.* 3. *Shew the inequality there was between the gain of the world, and the loss of the soul.* These three particulars I committed to memory, as he delivered the



discourse, and after the meeting was done, went on my way about half a mile, sat down under the fence, took my pen and wrote down the propositions, and in this way fixed them in my memory, so that they are now as fresh in my memory, as though I had just heard them.

In the afternoon I travelled to another meeting-house, just as a very cold, formal *clergyman* was making the concluding prayer, as it is called. The following I remember he said : “ Lord we are all of us inimical to thy nature, thy government, and thy Son. We are inimical to thy spirit and thy dealings with us, as thy creatures,” &c. I concluded that, according to his prayer, he and his parish must be a very bad sort of people. After meeting I found a man, the son of Mr. Minor, who lived at Hartford, and preached to the baptist church in that town. He invited me to stay at his house till morning.

Monday morning I sat out again for Lyme. In Millinton, I stopped at a cider press, to drink, as they were then at work. While standing there, two men stood near me, conversing upon religion. One of them by the name of Dickinson, who afterwards became a preacher, said thus to the other man : “ When we were living in sin, gaming, drinking, dancing, and taking the name of the Lord in vain, all was well ; there was no complaint brought against us ; but since we left these things and meet to sing and pray, and exhort others to turn to the Lord, the cry is, delusion, delu-

sion, the parish is likely to be broken up ; and our minister is greatly alarmed." This conversation drew my attention, as I thought these men had religion, or they would not talk so. I soon left them, and went on my way. After walking about two miles, I enquired for a meeting, and was told that Elder Daniel Minor was to preach that evening in an house near where I then was.

This was the man that *sprinkled* me, so much against my will. He was a good man, and one the Lord owned and blessed in the conversion of sinners. This intelligence of the meeting rejoiced my heart as I greatly loved the man after my conversion. I went to the house and found him there. He soon asked me where I was from and my name. When he knew me as the son of Stephen Smith and Irene his wife, it gladdened his heart, especially when I told him that Christ was more to me than all other objects. This opened the way for me to have a lodging place that night, and food to eat, which I then needed. It appeared to me then, that my situation was some like that of Jacob, when he went from his father's house to Padan-aram. Every day something took place, that shewed me the Lord directed my steps. In the evening, a great assembly met in the house ; among whom were many lately converted to God, who were very happy in the Lord.

Mr. Minor preached that evening from these words, Luke, xviii. 38, "*And he cried saying, Jesus, thou son of David, have mer-*

*cy on me."* His manner of preaching was new, and peculiarly pleasing to me. He noticed the situation of the blind man, and applied it to the state of those who lived in darkness, and without God in the world ; the kindness of Jesus in passing through where the blind man lived ; and his kindness in sending his spirit and gospel among those whom the god of this world has blinded. He observed, that when Jesus passed through a place, there was always a multitude to attend, though many opposed him ; so, said he, it is now ; many run together, though not always to be benefitted. He noticed that Jesus' passing through, caused the blind man to cry after him, as soon as he knew Jesus was near ; so, said he, it is now ; as soon as poor sinners hear there is one that can save them, they at once begin to cry to him to help, as no other one can do it. He stated that then, as soon as the blind man began to cry out, some rebuked him that he should hold his peace ; we are told, said he, who those were ; they were such as went before ; such as are planning how Christ shall come ; so it is now. When the Lord pours out his spirit, there is always a company who go before, who oppose the work of the Lord. Had these men who rebuked the blind man, been asked if they were unwilling the blind man should see, they would doubtless have said, no, but we wish him not to be so singular and noisy in the city. Why cannot he be more moderate ? This, said the preacher, is the case now ;



These cold formal professors are willing, they say, that men should be converted, but they might make less noise, and let the minister do the talking. Such have planned out the way, and if every thing does not go on as they have planned, they are determined to oppose it. He observed that the more they rebuked the blind man, the more he cried after Jesus ; so, said he, my brethren, it is now.

In this way he went through the discourse, and I thought that those men who cried delusion ! and ruin upon the parish, had their due that evening, with others who attended. I was never better pleased with a discourse than with this. After he had done, there were several warm exhortations delivered by male and female ; some praying and spiritual singing. This was the happiest meeting, I thought, ever enjoyed by me on earth. It was indeed an heavenly place in Christ Jesus. The next day I went on my way to Lyme ; there I heard old Elder Jason Lee preach in the spirit, and with power. My stay at Lyme was short ; as my school was to commence the first of December. On my way back to Hartford, I visited Millinton again, and attended some meetings with those who had found peace in believing.

There is one little circumstance which I will here mention. In Millinton on my return, I went to the same place where the men were making cider, and there spent considerable part of a day in getting apple seeds from the pomace, to carry to Vermont to raise an



orchard. I got out about a quart of seeds, dried them, carried them to Hartford, and when I returned home carried them in my pack, sowed them in the spring, and all the apple trees now on that farm, grew from the seeds I carried in my pack from Millinton to Woodstock.

At Millinton, I heard that there was a council of baptist ministers to be holden at at Glostenbury ; this I wished to attend, hoping to gain some useful knowledge. The council was held at the house of Deacon Hodge ; I travelled almost the whole day to get there, without eating any food after breakfast ; and it was late before I could get any food. After supper, I proposed going a little distance with a brother who had invited me to his house. While waiting for him, I felt some unwell and before he was ready, was obliged to take off my pack and set down ; this was caused by overdoing, and going without food. I was seized with a violent pain in my side, and could find no relief until the doctor came and took away some blood. The next day I was confined to the bed ; the second day to the room ; the third day I went round the house ; and the fourth, walked about the door yard some ; and in one week was able to pursue my journey.

This was a serious time to me ; about one hundred and eighty miles from home ; among all strangers, who had never heard of me before ; and not more than twenty-five cents of money at my command. Notwithstanding all

these seeming difficulties, I was kindly used, and made welcome to all done for me.

### CHAPTER XIII.

As soon as my health was restored, I went to East-Hartford, in order to begin my school at the time agreed on, and found myself, at the time appointed, surrounded with an agreeable number of children, from six to sixteen years old, who had come to be instructed in reading, writing, &c.

The first week passed away without any thing to interrupt, till Saturday about twelve o'clock, when a circumstance occurred, which came near causing a breach between me and one of the principal men in the district. This man was an episcopalian, and sent two children, a son and daughter. On Saturday, about noon, it was and now is generally the custom to teach the children what is called the catechism, composed by so many *divines*, at Westminster. These children on that day, brought the church prayer-book, which contained the episcopalian catechism. When I called on them to repeat the other catechism, one of them said, they did not say that, but had one of their own, and handed me the prayer-book open, where their catechism began.

This was a new thing to me, as at that time I did not know there was another on earth. In reading it over, I came to the following

questions and answers : Question. "What is your name?" Answer. "N." Q. "Who gave you that name?" A. "My *godfather* and *godmother*, in my baptism, in which I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an heir of the kingdom of heaven." After looking at all this, I told the children I could not teach that to them, for it was false, and I could not knowingly teach falsehoods. I went through with the presbyterian catechism, but the poor little episcopalian children were obliged to set and hear, without any part in that which was as bad as their own catechism in many things.

As soon as the children returned home, they told their father what the new master had said and done. He was highly offended, and threatened to take them from the school. This grieved the children as they were remarkably well pleased with their new instructor. On Monday morning, the two children returned with a note to this amount : "Sir, you are requested to meet me this evening at my house, and tarry till morning. Yours, &c." This request I complied with, and went from the school-house, and found the man had called in his neighbors to him, to converse upon his catechism and confound me. After supper was over, and the people seated around a good country fire, Mr. B. thus addressed me : "Sir, I think it strange that you should refuse to teach my children their catechism ; you are the only one who ever refused to do it in that school-house. Why have you treated me in

this manner?" My reply was this: "Sir, it was not for want of good will to you, or your children, that I refused to teach them your catechism; but because I considered the statements there to be absolutely false and contrary to the scriptures of truth, and I dare not teach contrary to that book.

He observed, that great and good men made that catechism, and good men had for ages believed it, and that it must be true, for such men would not publish falsehoods; and, said he, do you suppose you know better than such men as the bishops of London have been? Here he grew warm upon the subject. I told him it was not my business to dispute their goodness, nor set myself up as wise; but one thing was certain, from the scripture, viz: that those who were sons of God, were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God; and that men were born of the spirit to be members of the kingdom of heaven; and Christ said, "Except a man be born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." And that men were saved, not by works of righteousness which they have done, but by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. I then told him that my being sprinkled did me no good, and that I believed I had known, and then did know, what being born of the spirit meant; and that we were children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, and not by baptism.



When I spake of knowing what regeneration meant, he yielded, as it was beyond what he had experienced. "Well," said he, "I insist on it that you teach my children the catechism." "I will do it sir, upon this condition, and no other ; I will teach it to them, and when I have done, will tell them it is false, and charge them not to believe one word of that part which says baptism makes them children of God, members of Christ, and heirs of the kingdom." "I will agree to that," said he, and so the conversation ended as to the catechism. The next Saturday, the two children brought their book, and I remembered my promise to them and their father, and at the usual time began : Question, to the girl, "What is your name ?" She answered, Nancy. "Who gave you that name ?" Answer, "My godfather and godmother, in my baptism," &c. Then the same to the boy, who was younger. After going through, I thus addressed them : "Children, these things are false, and you must not believe them. There are no such beings in existence as *god-fathers* and *godmothers* ; these are inventions of men, and baptism does not make us children of God ; you must believe in Christ, or you will be undone forever." The children wept, and took their seats. As soon as they returned home, the father said, "Well, children, did your master learn you the catechism ?" "Yes sir," said Nancy. "And what did he say ?" "He said it was false, and we must not believe it." "Ah," said he,

"your master is determined to have his own way." This ended the matter ; he sent his children constantly, often invited me to his house, but never after that, sent his prayer-book to the school, for me to learn his children falsehoods.

The first time I heard the baptist minister preach, after my school began, his text was, Ezek. x. 13, "O WHEEL !" His subject was this ; "*The wonderful superintendant providence of God.*" He told of some remarkable instances of the preservation of men in thunder storms, hurricanes, &c. I was so little benefitted by the discourse, that there is scarcely any thing left now, besides the *wheel*. All the other parts of the carriage, and burden, are gone from me. The man did not appear to understand the subject contained in the text.

There was in that place, a happy number of people who were devoted to God, and who endeavored to walk in newness of life. With these good people I spent much of my time when out of school.

It was my intention, after engaging my school, to speak some among them that winter ; but my gift was to me so small, and my knowledge of the scriptures so little, that it was more than I could undertake. Once, I spake in their meeting, upon the conduct of Abraham in offering up Isaac. My knowledge was so small, and being greatly agitated by hearing my own voice, that I said but little and sat down. In the time of my residence

there, I heard Jacob Winchel preach ; a young man who began to preach when about nineteen or twenty years old. He then lived in Hartford city. At that time it was considered an extraordinary thing for a person to be a preacher at that age. Many people came that day to hear him. His text was this, Mark vi. 5, "*It is I, be not afraid.*" In his introduction, he noticed the miracle wrought in feeding the multitude with a few loaves, and observed that he had often thought himself like the lad with a few loaves, and frequently found God fed many in that way. He mentioned the situation of the disciples in the ship without Jesus ; and stated the uncomfortable and unsafe state of all who sat out in any business without Christ. He raised this doctrine from the text : "*That Christ was the only, and all-sufficient help of all who put their trust in him.*" In illustrating this statement, he described the glory and fulness of Christ, as I had never heard before ; and then shewed how he had comforted and delivered such as trusted in him. He mentioned such as were safe among lions, in the furnace, in prisons, and other situations the most distressing.

Before he had done, I thought that Christ was more valuable than every thing else ; that christians were a safe and happy people, and a preacher of the everlasting gospel the happiest man on earth. His preaching seemed for a while to discourage me from ever speaking in public, on account of my ignorance of

these things which he appeared so familiarly acquainted with.

Through the whole of this winter, the quotation bible, which I carried in my pocket, was my principal study, being convinced that the scriptures were able to make me wise unto salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus. At one time, when in the house of my episcopalian friend, B. he shewed me a book, just published in Hartford, entitled, "Osterwalds' christian theology," or a compendious body of divinity; and advised me to purchase it of him, as it was a religious book. After examining its contents, I concluded to take it at one dollar fifty cents, which was so much out of my wages. This book I read for several years, until I committed every chapter to memory. This was the beginning of my studying *divinity*. When my school ended, I had taken out of my fifteen dollars, the body of divinity, one pair of shoes, and one pair of stockings, which amounted to about four dollars and fifty cents. There was then about ten dollars and fifty cents left, which I was determined to lay out to the best advantage. As I had never owned a great coat or surtout, I determined to own one, if it was ever so coarse.

Having received my wages, I walked to Hartford city, which was ten miles, and found a peace of blue cloth, which would answer for me. Enough for a surtout would amount to almost nine dollars, not leaving me quite two dollars to spend from East-Hartford to



Woodstock, one hundred and seventy miles. Having obtained my cloth, I walked back the same day, and made preparation to return home. The good people where I lived cooked some victuals for me to eat on my way home. I filled up my pack with my few clothes, shoes, stockings and food, and tied my cloth on the top of my pack, which by this time was quite heavy ; fixed it on soldier fashion, bid the people farewell, and set out with good courage in March, for Vermont.

When I set out from Connecticut, there was no snow, but after travelling about fifty miles, there was good sledding. When within two days ride of Windsor, Vt. I put up at a tavern where a man from Vermont stayed, who was going, with his wife and child, in a sleigh to Windsor. I asked him if he would give me a ride to Windsor, or part of the way. He said his load was heavy, but he could carry my pack, and I might take hold of the hind part of the sleigh and ride down hill, if I could keep up so. This he thought was impossible for me to do. I told him I was used to walking and running, and could keep up. We sat out early in the morning, and he having two good horses, sometimes drove faster than I wished him to go. When going down the hills, he would say, "you will kill yourself, in running so long and fast." At night I was some tired, but not the least discouraged. The next day it rained, and going over the pine plains in Walpole and Charlestown, the water was considerable deep in the road, but

I waded through it as fast as the horses went. We arrived at Windsor about four o'clock ; there he stopped and gave up my pack. I was then about thirteen or fourteen miles from my father's house, and was determined to get there before I slept.

After walking about three miles, I came to an house where a baptist deacon lived, by the name of Thompson. Here I ate some warm victuals, which was the first after leaving Hartford. When I took off my shoes, my stockings were quite bloody, my feet having been so wet all day and stepping so hard in keeping up with the sleigh. After eating some food, and resting a little, I set out about sundown for Woodstock. My limbs were so sore, that sometimes it appeared impossible for me to reach home that night. I walked very slow all the way, and some time between midnight and day, I arrived at my father's house, almost overcome with the two last days travelling. When I opened the door, my mother sat by the fire, having two beds in the room ; on one lay my oldest brother, on the other my youngest sister, sick with the measles. She was quite overcome on seeing me, as she had not heard from me after we parted in Walpole the October before. She soon got me some refreshment, and I retired to take some rest which was needful at that time. It has often seemed strange to me, that my strength should endure to journey in this way, but the Lord preserved me, and to him be the praise.

After I had retired to sleep, my mother took my stockings and put them into water to wring them out ; and she told me the next day that the water was red with the blood she wrung out of them. My feet were very sore for several days after, and to add to all the rest, I took the measles, and was not able to do much for about one month after my return.

## CHAPTER XIV.

As soon as I was well of the measles, I engaged in work on the farm for a short time, and about the first of May, 1789, began a school for six months, at the same house where I first undertook the business.

At this time, my mind was greatly exercised on baptism, which had been so plain a duty for about four years. I was convinced that believers were the only people on whom baptism was enjoined ; and that burying in water only, was scriptural baptism ; but the greatest and only objection in my mind was, whether I was such a believer as the bible directed to be baptised. My experience was to me so small, that I thought no person could gain an evidence that I had passed from death to life. After a long struggle, I determined upon one thing, which was to tell the church what I had experienced, and why it was my desire to be baptised ; and then should feel clear, whether they received me or not. With this determ-

ination, on the day the monthly church meeting of the baptist church was held, in the north part of the town, I set out for the meeting on foot, about four miles from where I lived.

At the place of meeting I found a considerable number of the members together, and Elder William Grow with them, the man I heard preach in the orchard in Connecticut several years before. They all were united in love and happy in their union. After they had gone through with their business, with much trembling I rose and stated to them the occasion of my meeting with them at that time. After giving them the reason of my hope in Christ, each one was asked if they could receive me as one born of God. Every one present declared that they had fellowship with me as one born of God. The way was then open for me to be baptised. This was the most crossing to my natural feelings of any thing I had ever been called to attend unto in all my life.

Had I obeyed four years before, there would have been a pleasure with the duty, but having so long neglected the command, the duty was about all left to lead me to obedience. Being determined to submit to Christ in that command, we made ready and went to the water, of what is called Queechy river, near the house of Ichabod Churchill, who now lives in the same house where the meeting was held. The brethren and others gathered round; Elder Grow spake solemnly, and intelligibly upon the subject, and then led me into the



river, and baptised me in the name of the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST; after which we both came up out of the water, after the example of our blessed Lord. When on the bank of the river, we sung an hymn which I had chosen for that occasion, and which then appeared good and important to me. The following are the two first verses :

*"Blest be my God that I was born,*

*To hear the joyful sound ;*

*That I was born to be baptis'd,*

*Where gospel truths abound.*

*I might have been a pagan born,*

*Or else a veiled Jew ;*

*Or cheated with an Alcoran,*

*Among the Turkish crew, " &c.*

This second verse was peculiar to me, as I viewed it an amazing display of God's goodness in shewing me the riches of his grace in Christ Jesus, by whom so great a sinner could be saved. After being baptised, my mind was calm, as I had done as it was commanded. Though I had been received as one born again, and baptised ; yet I was not considered a member of the church ; for the baptists at that time had four doors by which a man must enter, to be in the church. 1. He must give the reason of his hope in Christ. 2. He must be baptised. 3. The articles of faith, and church-covenant must be read, to which he must give his assent. All this did not make him a member. 4. He must be voted in ; then he is a member in full fellowship, if he holds to close communion. All this was done, and

in this way I was declared, and recorded a member of the second baptist church in Woodstock. The articles of faith to which I then assented, contained what the baptists call particular election ; or that Christ died for the elect, and that such a number should be saved, &c. These *articles* I did not understand for they had never been read to me before ; and being read but once, it was not possible for me to remember much of them. I assented to them, because the minister and church thought they were true. Since that time, the minister and the members have rejected that abominable doctrine of partiality, and now stand in gospel liberty.

The next day after being baptised was their communion, I joined with them in that solemn ordinance, which was peculiarly so to me at that time, on several accounts : 1. To find myself numbered among those I considered heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, was to me a great and solemn thing. 2. My parents were members of the same church, and were present, and communed at the same time ; this was joy to them, and solemnity to me. 3. To hear the sufferings and death of Christ described, (which that ordinance shewed forth,) as it then was by the preacher, took great hold of my mind. 4. The pleasing thought, that one day we should meet each other, all the redeemed, and the Redeemer, whose death we shewed forth, rendered the scene solemn and glorious beyond that I had ever experienced before. As but few were baptised at

that time, especially among the youth ; the news of my being baptised spread abroad, and much was said upon the subject.

It was not long after being baptised ; before my mind was greatly distressed, fearing I had gone too fast ; and sometimes thought it would have been better not to have been baptised ; knowing if I fell away again, the consequence, to myself and others would be worse than though I had never owned Christ ; and several times that summer, thought if I had not been baptised, I should still neglect it. After some time, my mind was considerably freed from those doubts and fears, which caused me so much trouble. There was another thing which greatly troubled me that summer ; that was the thought of preaching the gospel to others. There was no righteous thing which my mind was so opposed to, as this ; and it was my determination never to submit to it, if it could be avoided righteously ; and though my mind was often exercised about speaking publicly ; yet it often seemed foolish in me to think of any such things, as, in my own mind, I was destitute of every qualification requisite for that great and glorious work. I thought myself destitute of natural, acquired, or spiritual qualifications for such an undertaking. In the course of the summer, I had an opportunity to hear several baptist ministers preach, and some of them made such poor work of it, that I thought they had better be called something beside preachers ; and concluded that if I could not be more profitable in

speaking, than such, it would be much better to remain in silence.

There was one man who was quite an objection to my speaking in public. Let him have what text he would, his sermon was always about the same. After talking awhile, he would tell us of Daniel in the lion's den ; Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the fiery furnace ; and Paul and Silas in prison. These three things generally made out the chief of his discourse. One time he was invited to preach a sermon in my school-house, on the day of the annual thanksgiving in Vermont. He came, and the people gathered, congregationalists, presbyterians, baptists, &c. to hear the thanksgiving sermon. His text was this ; Mark xvi. 16, "*He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned.*" His discourse was almost wholly upon baptism, and was very disgusting to many, particularly the advocates for infant sprinkling. This proved to me, not only the unskillfulness of some preachers, but taught me some of the difficulties preachers must encounter. I said to some, "If I could not make out better than that, I would never try again." These things did not rid my mind of the thought of preaching, though unfit for the work.

Two things I was determined upon ; one was, never to speak in public, without an evidence of being called of God to the work ; the other was, to do every thing in my power to prepare me for that work, if ever called to



it by the spirit of God. To do this, I made the bible my chief study through the season; this I continually carried with me, as had for some time been my practice. It being a quotation bible, greatly assisted my mind in comparing the different parts of the scriptures together; particularly the prophecies in the old-testament, and their accomplishment in the new-testament. This was my constant business when out of school, unless when employed in reading "Osterwald's christian theology," and a short system of divinity written by Norton. I also read "Edwards' history of redemption," some; "Beston's fourfold state," and "Flavel's sermons." Others might make greater progress, but no one could be more industrious, nor labor more to treasure up useful knowledge. At the time of teaching the school, after entering my twenty-first year, I had one advantage as to speaking in public. The congregational meeting was held in the school-house, which was made large for that purpose. This meeting I generally attended. When they had no preaching, and it was but a small part of the time they had any minister, they read Flavel's sermons. At this time they requested me to read for them. With a great deal of diffidence I consented, and was obliged to put on my *spectacles*, as I could not read without them. My manner of reading was so acceptable, that they repeatedly requested me to read for them. By this practice, that fear in standing before an assembly, gradually wore off, and in the course of a few

months, I spake a few words once or twice in a private meeting, and sometimes prayed in conference meeting; but being naturally, what is called bashful, I underwent much on all such occasions; and frequently wondered why others should think me possessed of a public gift.

Six months of this year, I was confined to the school-house, and to close study when out of school. There was no person on earth that knew the labors of my mind at that time. I became almost a recluse; retiring almost wholly from company, unless I could get with such men as were able and willing to teach me.

After finishing my school, I returned home, not knowing what to do; though rather determined to quit the business of teaching children, which was too much confinement for me. I was willing and able to work, and thought if that constant labor in my mind, as to speaking in public could be removed, I would, with the greatest cheerfulness, put on my frock and go to work among the black logs again, as I had done before. My father asked me what I meant to do. My reply was, "I cannot tell." As he had freed me at the age of eighteen or nineteen, he was entirely willing I should still retain my liberty, and do what I thought was duty. I endeavored to work, but my mind was so fixed upon reading, that I could not work. In the time of teaching school, I had purchased a few books, and had a small book-case made, which I could carry

in my hand from place to place, where I hoarded. This I carried to my father's house, and believe my mother now has it in her possession. I went from the field to the house, opened my little book-case, took out my favorite book, and read the fifteenth chapter of Genesis. The first verse comforted me much. "After these things, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, fear not Abram, I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." From this, I took some new courage to pursue my search after truth in the scriptures of truth ; though much against ever being a preacher, At this time, after entering my twenty-first year, I undertook to commit the new-testament to memory, from the beginning of the epistle to the Romans, to the end. This, I in a great measure accomplished in about eighteen months from that time.

## CHAPTER XV.

From the time of leaving my summer school till I began it again in the winter, my mind was continually distressed on account of preaching the gospel to others. It often was surprising that such a subject should trouble me, when in my own view, I was destitute of every qualification for such a work. Many of the church spake frequently to me upon the subject, and told me I was hiding my talent in the earth. When I told them how unqualified my mind was, they would bring

up what Moses said ; “ That he was slow of speech, slow tongue, and not eloquent.” When I told them my age was an excuse, they would bring the words of Jeremiah, chap. i. 6, 7, 8, “ Then said I, Ah, Lord God ! behold, I cannot speak ; for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, say not I am a child ; for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee, thou shalt speak.” When I told them of my ignorance, weakness, foolishness, and that for many years I had thought myself a fool, and destitute of common sense, and that I never could talk as others could, they would bring me the words of Paul, 1 Cor. i. 27, 28, “ But God hath chosen the *foolish* things of this world, to confound the wise ; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty ; and base things of the world, and things that are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things that are not, to bring to nought the things that are ; that no flesh should glory in his presence.” These things lost their force in my mind, as I concluded they did not anywise apply to me. Though there was much weight in these things, yet I was sometimes displeased when my brethren applied them to me.

It was my constant practice to attend all the meetings near ; especially when there was any one to preach, hoping to gain some useful knowledge. My mind was, however, often disappointed ; for some were called preachers, who needed to be taught what



were the first principles of the oracles of God. Sometime in November, I went to see Elder William Grow, the man that baptised me, who lived in Bridgwater, about six miles from my father's house. As he was considered a man of knowledge, and a great preacher, I concluded he could learn me to preach. He received me kindly, and gave me liberty to read his books, which I considered a great privilege. He had one book called "*Skeletons of sermons*," that is, bones without meat. They were properly, *blank sermons*; a man in drawing ten thousand of them, would never obtain the highest prize in Christ Jesus. They were fixed in the following manner: 1. The text was written. 2. The propositions were stated one after another; the passages of scripture quoted to prove the propositions, &c. Then the inferences and application, set in order after them. These were fixed, to be filled up by the young preacher, or by an old ignorant one. Elder Grow handed me the book, and said, "There is the book they gave me, when men undertook to make a minister of me." Speaking in this manner of the book, gave me a diminutive idea of it. Notwithstanding this, I read and examined it, till I said, as David did of Saul's armour, "I cannot go with these." Cruden's concordance, gave me the most information of any book he had; as it contained the meaning of many words which I had never before seen explained. I tarried with him about two weeks, and returned home.

Soon after this I visited my uncle, Elisha Ransom, a baptist preacher. He was not a popular preacher, but a man of penetration, and good understanding. To him I am now indebted for the first instructions in the art of reading; and the instructions I received from him, in the month of attending his school, laid a foundation for after improvement. As he had instructed me in the first principles of reading, I considered him capable of teaching me in the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. I told him some of the exercises of my mind, as to the scriptures, speaking in public, &c. and wished such instruction and advice from him, as he was able to give. He spake freely upon the subject; noticed the greatness and importance of preaching the everlasting gospel to men, and advised me to make the scriptures my main study, as they were able to make me wise unto salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus.

The last part of his conversation at that time was upon words; and though he did not talk long, what he said has been of great use to me, from that day till now. He stated that it was of importance to know the meaning of words, and the different things often meant by one word. He quoted what Solomon said, "The preacher sought to find out acceptable words; and that which was written was upright, even words of truth." He quoted the writings of Paul: "Let no man deceive you with vain words." "Hold fast the form of sound words." "With good words and fair

speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple.” “Charge them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit ; but to the subverting of the hearers.” After quoting these places of scripture upon words ; he observed that there were many words used, not found in the scriptures, and many scripture words used, not as the writers used them ; and that to know the meaning of a word, we must know what the author meant when he used the word. When you read, said he, the word *righteousness*, *atonement*, *hope*, *salvation*, *grace*, *truth*, or any such word, find the subject that word is used to convey. In this way said he, you will be rich in ideas as well as words ; for he who only knows words, is like one who always deals in empty vessels ; you must go to some other if you are hungry. All this looked rational, and I then resolved to attend to what he said. That conversation has been of great use to me.

In the first part of public speaking, it was my constant study to know the meaning of important words used in the scriptures, and to give their meaning to my hearers. For several years past, (remembering what my uncle said, that there were many words used, not in the scriptures,) I have taken particular notice of the words used to describe doctrines, which are not in the bible, and have endeavored to point them out in speaking and writing, which has greatly enraged many who consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ. This instruction given me up-

on words, laid the foundation for writing my new-testament dictionary, in which the most important words are noticed ; the subject stated, contained in the words ; and unscriptural words named and left behind.

For the instruction of others, particularly young preachers, I here observe, that many words are now in use to describe some principal part of doctrine, which are not in the scriptures ; this often causes strife and contention. If the word is used to express a subject in the bible, the word used in the bible to express that subject, is better than an unscriptural word. If the word and doctrine are both unscriptural, it is in vain to undertake to prove from the bible that which is not once named there. The word *trinity* is an unscriptural word, and so is the doctrine, and we may as well prove *purgatory* from the bible, as the trinity ; for neither of them are mentioned there. There are some scriptural words which are used to describe what is not named in the bible. Baptism is one. It is in the bible ; but there is no account of baptising infants there ; and all said in favor of that is invention. When preachers are willing to leave unscriptural words, and unscriptural doctrines, for the words of Christ, and the plain express doctrine of Christ and the apostles, jars and contentions will cease, and all will consent to wholesome words, and the doctrine which is according to godliness.

The winter before I was twenty-one years old, was spent in teaching the youth, in the



school-house, in the south part of Woodstock. The evenings were generally spent in reading the scriptures, or some religious books. Edwards' history of redemption, I read with attention and pleasure. Through the winter my mind was constantly agitated with the subject of preaching, which I wished never to be engaged in, if possible to avoid it. Sometimes it appeared to me that death was to be chosen rather than preaching the gospel, and often I thought if left to my choice to be a preacher or die, I should choose rather to die. Several times, after the people were gone from the school-house, there was a strong temptation in my mind to get under the school-house and die there.

This was the state of my mind through the winter, and there was no one that knew the unhappy state of my mind. Some time in March, I left the school and returned to my father's, and attended closely to my studies, meaning never to be a preacher if it could be avoided, and yet to be prepared for it, if it should ever be duty. My mind was so distressed oftentimes, that I could not work, and sometimes had no appetite for my food. Many times I arose before day, and went into the woods, and there remained the greatest part of the day, without any food. My time was spent in prayer, reading the bible, and meditating on what it contained. Sometimes I wished a bible had never been put into my hands; sometimes I felt a strong temptation to throw my bible away and drown myself, or

starve in the woods. My parents were frequently alarmed about me, fearing what might happen, and frequently called after me, when in the wilderness, and though I heard, yet I gave them no answer.

In the month of May, I began my summer school, in the same house where it was in the winter. About this time, I heard there was to be a meeting of several baptist ministers in Chester, about twenty miles from Woodstock, the last of the month. I had a great desire to attend the meeting, hoping to learn something profitable. Elder John Peak, who now lives in Newburyport, Mass. was to attend that meeting, and requested me to go. Having obtained leave of the school committee, to be gone one week, I put on my surtout, without any other coat, or change of raiment, and set out on foot, for Windsor, where Elder Peak lived, expecting to walk from there to Chester, while he rode through Claremont, to attend a meeting he had appointed.

At that time the baptist ministers were poor, and made a mean appearance in the world, to what many of them do now. To have dressed one of them in *black* then, with a *band* and *surplice*, and called him Rev. or D. D. would have affrighted him, especially had he in addition to this, received a salary. Mr. Peak was low in the world, and in his own esteem, and the Lord looked to him then. He was a tailor and followed the business when at home. He had an old horse, poor and lame, which he thought unfit to ride to Chester, as he ex-

pected to go from Chester to Adams in Massachusetts, to attend the Shaftsbury association the first of June. He told me, that if it would not mortify my pride too much, I might ride his old lame horse to Chester. This offer I accepted, and set out with him. We were both poorly dressed, and felt our dependence. The first day we rode to Claremont; he preached, and I prayed with the assembly, which was about all I ever had done in public, at that time.

The next day we set out for Chester. We crossed Connecticut river from Charlestown, into Rockingham. The only way we could cross the river was in a canoe. We put our saddles in the cance; led our horses into the river, one upon each side; the man paddled the boat; we held our horses by the bridles, and they swam by the side of us and got safely across the river.

In riding a small distance from the river, we came to the house of Elder John Peckins, a baptist minister, living in that town. With him we tarried that night. As my calculation was to hear and not speak much, my attention was drawn to all he and Mr. Peak said.

The next day we all went to Chester, and put up at the house of Elder Aaron Leland, a baptist minister, who still resides in that town. He received us cheerfully, and his company was peculiarly pleasing to me, as he was a good man, and of considerable information, for that day. There were not many ministers at the meeting, nor many people. In conver-

sation at Elder Leland's house, some things were conversed upon, which they called *doctrinal points*; but as they were beyond my comprehension, I retained but little of what was said.

The instruction and satisfaction gained at this meeting was so little, that it was lost time, and I wished I had tarried at home and read my bible. As Elder Leland was going to the association, he proposed to me, to go with them. Although I greatly desired to go, yet it appeared impracticable, as I had no horse but a cripple; only an outside coat, to wear in June, and had agreed to return to my school in one week. Elder Peak said, I might have his horse free of expence, and thought the people would not complain if my school was left two or three weeks. From every consideration, I concluded to set out with them accross the green mountains, through a desert land, and waste howling wilderness.

The first Sunday I attended meeting with Elder Leland in Westminster, at the baptist meeting house. Here I prayed after he had done preaching; which was the first time I ever prayed in a meeting house. My mind was greatly embarrassed, as a meeting house then was to me a very different place from what it is now. On Monday morning, Elder Peak, and Elder Perkins came on, to go with us to the association. The first place we stopped at, if my memory serves, was at Colerain, at the house of Elder Obed War-



ren, a baptist preacher. With him we tarried till morning. He lived in a log house, but was blessed with the comforts of life. He and his wife received us joyfully, and possessed the spirit of the gospel. We spent the time agreeably in conversation, prayer, and singing. At this house I first saw Rippon's hymn book, which pleased me much. I found the hymn, "Jesus and shall it ever be;" I wrote it off, and when I came to Newhampshire, brought it, and it is now generally known and sung by thousands.

## CHAPTER XVI.

On the morrow we set out with Elder Warren and others, for Adams. We had a dismal desert to pass through; some of the way very rough, and but few inhabitants. We passed through what was then called No. 7, and Bullock's Grant. Several places we were obliged to lead our horses, and sometimes we were almost afraid to go before them down the hills. After travelling some miles without any refreshment, excepting what we received of the brooks in the way, Elder Leland, who with me and one or two more were forward of the others, sat down on a log by the way, to wait for those behind. After the others came up, he said, "Brethren, I wish you to join with me to sing this verse,"

*"Lord what a wretched land is this,*

*Which yields us no supply!*

*No cheering fruit, no wholesome tree,*

*Nor streams of living joy."*

This we all sung heartily, and wished for something better than the hymn or wilderness afforded. This rough road, and hardship, was nothing to me, compared to the pleasure anticipated at the end of the journey.

Towards night we found ourselves among inhabitants, who let us have some refreshment free. My lame horse kept up with the others; and though without one cent of money, I was continually provided for among the company. Towards night, we began to enquire for baptists, and heard of one at some distance. We travelled till about midnight to get to his house. The man received us, put our horses into the pasture, and gave us bread and milk for supper. We slept, some on beds, and some on the floor; so we remained till morning. This was the day the association met; we were then several miles from Adams, and rode fast, to be there in season. We arrived at Adams about the middle of the day, and put up with old Elder Peter Wordan, a worthy preacher. The ministers who attended the association, were chiefly at his house. Some of them I now remember; among the many were the following: Elder John Gano, from Kentucky; his son Stephen Gano, who now lives at Providence, R. I. Elder John Waldo, Elder Henry Green, Elder Hamilton, Elder Moffat, Elder Isaac Webb, who now lives in Albany; Elder Isaac Smith, Elder Justus Hull, of Little Hosick, N. Y. Elder Caleb Blood, of Shaftsbury, Vt. since died in Portland, Maine.

These I now remember, besides those I went there with.

These Elders were happy in meeting each other, on that occasion. I had but little to do excepting to hear, learn, and remember. The chief conversation before the public meeting, was upon the things of the kingdom of Christ. I remember some conversation they had respecting ministers and preaching. Mr. Hamilton, who was an Englishman, told the company of a good man in England, who had more religion than learning, that preached from Isaiah, i. 8, *"And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city."* The man read it, *"as a log in a garden of cucumbers;"* and from this, undertook to shew how professors of religion stood, or lay in the way of others. Mr. Peak, who was then an inquisitive man, and desirous to learn, asked Mr. Hamilton what that place of scripture meant. Mr. Hamilton said, that in Asia, vineyards were often far from any house; and that for the accommodation of the vine dresser, in the season of attending to the fruit, a small hut was built for him, and when the grapes were all gathered, the man left his cottage till the next year. He also stated, that in many parts of the world, cucumbers, were a principle article of food, and where there was a large field of them far from an house, a small place was built, that a man might lodge there through the night, until the season was over; then he left it till another season. This be

said described the state of Jerusalem, when its riches and inhabitants were carried away by their enemies.

At the close of this conversation, some one mentioned that it was about time to attend the public meeting. The ministers then began to look at their watches, and no two of them agreed. Mr. Blood observed, that if the preachers were as far from each other, as their watches, they should have a jumbling association. Mr. Smith from Patridgefield, Mass. observed, "that to have their watches right, they must all be set by the sun." To this they all agreed, and went to the meeting house. This last saying I kept in memory, and have since found the benefit of. There are many preachers and others, who compare themselves by themselves, and measure themselves among themselves; but Paul says, they are not wise. Each sect, or party say, we are agreed among ourselves; or at least we mean to be so, and especially those that differ the most among themselves. Were all to submit to Christ, who is the standard, the sun of righteousness; all would not only be alike, but all would be right, and in harmony among themselves.

I do not now remember the order in which each man preached; but well remember who preached, the texts spoken upon, and the manner in which they preached. The first sermon was delivered by Elder John Waldo, who lived in Vermont, or New-York. His text was John, xvii. 22, "*That they may be*



*one, even as we are one."* He undertook first, to shew how God and Christ were one. 1. They were one in creating the world. 2. One in ruling the world. 3. One in the work of redemption. 4. One in election, or in choosing a few to the exclusion of all others. Second, he endeavored to shew what that oneness was, which Christ prayed his disciples might have. The next sermon was delivered by a young man by the name of Thomas Montonye, who then lived in Warwick, N. Y. and now lives in Northampton, Penn. His text was, Psalm cxliv. 15, "*Yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord.*" He first described that people whose God is the Lord. 2. The happiness peculiar to such a people. His discourse I treasured up, and can repeat it as to the particulars now. I then thought him the happiest young man on earth. He was not far from my age, and I had no doubt of his being called of God to preach the gospel; and supposed he had no doubt of his duty in that respect.

In the course of the business of the association, Elder John Gano, was requested to give some account of the state of the churches in the western country, and of revivals of religion among the people. The account he gave was interesting and refreshing.

At the close of the business of the association, Elder John Gano preached a farewell sermon, as he never expected to visit that place again. I was not at all pleased, at hearing he was to preach, as there was oth-

ers whose appearance was much more pleasing to me than his. I concluded he was asked to preach out of respect to his age, and from his appearance, being a small old man, I concluded he could not be much of a preacher. After prayer and singing, he stood up to read his text which was this, Rom. xvi. 24, "*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*" After reading his text, he stood some time without saying one word; in which time the eyes of all the assembly were fixed upon him. I concluded he remained silent, because he had nothing to say. At last he said, with a loud voice, "I am loth to spoil this good text, and I am sure I can make it no better." Here he paused again for some time. He then spake again, saying, "Who shall I say this to: the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all." He then paused again, and looking earnestly at the young people in the gallery, said, "You young people in the gallery, can I say this to you. I do not know; I fear not. Did the Lord ever see you on your knees in the grove, or in your bed chamber, crying like the publican for mercy? If so, I can say this to you, but I cannot without." By this time every person in the house was ready to hear, and I fully believed he could preach.

In his introduction he took particular notice of the salutations of Paul to the members of the church in Rome; in which not far from thirty are mentioned. He observed that often he felt backward in bidding farewell to each individual, when there were many in the com-

pany ; and also in asking the welfare of each one he met ; and sometimes when writing a letter, he gave his salutation to all as one, when there were several individuals, who merited a particular salutation in distinction from the whole. But, said he, when I read this chapter, and see how particular Paul was, to give orders to greet so many individuals, I feel ashamed of myself, to think I should be so sneaking, as to refuse to follow such an example, as the one here set by Paul the apostle of our Lord Jesus Christ. When he came to his text, he spake excellently of the grace of our Lord Jesus, and gave a solemn and profitable exhortation and warning to the ministers ; and particularly those that were young. The whole assembly felt the force of that portion he gave to each one in due season. The meeting closed by singing a farewell hymn, composed by Elder Justus Hull. "Farewell my brethren in the Lord."

This was an happy, profitable opportunity to me, as the glorious things I heard and understood, led me for a while to forget almost every thing earthly.

Elder Blood, and several other preachers in Vermont, had appointed what they called a general meeting, in Shaftsbury, where Elder Blood lived. As Elders Peak and Leland were to attend that meeting, I went with them ; being determined to hear and learn all that would profit me, thinking that might be the last meeting of the kind I should ever attend. This meeting was appointed

the Saturday, Sunday, and Monday after the meeting of the association, and the greater part of the Elders attended. There were several discourses delivered. Elder Henry Green, of Wallingford, spake from Ezekiel xviii. 25, "*Hear now, O house of Israel, is not my way equal? Are not your ways unequal?*" Elder T. Montonye, preached from Isaiah, xxxiii. 20, "*Look upon Zion the city of our solemnities.*" Elder Jordon Dodge, spake upon Solomon's Songs, iii. 9, "*King Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon.*"

On Sunday morning, Elder John Gano preached from Phil. ii. 5, "*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.*" In speaking upon his text, he noticed the exalted state of Jesus Christ. A great company of people came together to hear, among whom were several *deists*. In speaking upon Christ, he observed that almost every person professed to believe in Christ, excepting now and then a *deist*, and, said he, they are more impudent than the devil, for he acknowledged him to be the Son of God; and, said he, I should be ashamed to have it said that even the devil was a greater believer than myself. This was an heavy blow to the *deists* who attended the meeting.

After giving a description of the greatness of Christ, he considered the exhortation, "*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.*" He observed that many were opposed to *mimicry*, but, said he, I am not so



much opposed to it as some are ; we are in a mimicing world. "Here ! here !" said he, "is a pattern for you all ; mimic Jesus Christ ; *let this mind be in you that was in him ;*" act like him, and God, angels and good men will approve of your conduct." In speaking upon this particular, he observed that Jesus bowed before his father, and that every knee must bow to him, here or hereafter. He then, with the authority of one sent of God to preach, cast his eyes around on the assembly, and with a solemn voice, said, "My friends, young and old, I tell you it is but to bow at the present time ; it must be done ; do it now in secret, or you must bow in that great day, when an assembly of saints and angels shall see you bow under the iron rod, which shall dash you in pieces like a potter's vessel, and there will be none to deliver !" His words were like thunder, and while he thus spake, the solemnity of heaven seemed to gather around. and every ear witnessed to the solemn truth, uttered by this aged witness of Jesus. At noon Elder Blood baptised one, and they communed in the afternoon. Elder Gano, broke the bread, and talked solemnly, and profitably upon that command, and to the preachers and members present. One thing he said upon the bread and wine, which then was weighty to me, and which on that account I have retained to this day. When he took off the cloth which was over the bread and wine, he said that in doing it, he often thought of the widow who had preserved the

likeness of her husband to know how he once looked, though dead ; this likeness, said he, often causes grief ; but O, how great is the difference here ! This is to shew how Jesus once was when in the grave ; but this brings joy ; for it shews that he who was once dead is alive, and lives forevermore, and he says by this, " Because I live ye shall live also." This communion season was very solemn, and interesting to me. On Monday morning the Elders and brethren met again. Elder John Gano preached the last sermon but one, from 2 Cor. xiii. 11, "*Finally brethren farewell.*" He spake upon two things. 1. *The brethren.* 2. *What it was to fare well.* In speaking upon the brethren, he said a family was meant, and, said he, " I bless God ! I think I have an acquaintance with the first born of the whole family !" This was a profitable discourse, and as he was old, and about to leave the place soon, no more to return, what he said greatly affected the preachers, and many others who heard his last words. The last discourse was delivered by Elder Blood, from these words, "*Gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost.*" He took up every discourse that had been delivered ; mentioned each proposition, and the manner in which each particular was spoken upon. This sermon was a curiosity, as it not only brought each sermon to remembrance, but shewed the strength of memory with which the preacher was blessed. This with a few exhortations, some praying and singing, closed

the meeting. The people returned to their homes, and the preachers went their ways to preach the glad tidings to other cities also.

During the time of my stay in Shaftsbury, I lodged at the house of deacon Clark, a worthy brother, and I believe, real follower of the Lamb. His second wife, with whom he then lived, was the widow Brown, of Lyme, Conn. with whom I had been acquainted, when about ten years old. It was pleasing to meet her there, and great joy to her, to find me, as she believed, a lover of the Saviour. My visit between the meetings was particularly pleasing. Deacon Clark gave me a general account of his life, conversion, and afflictions. One circumstance he mentioned, I have often related in public and private, which was the following : “A few years ago,” said he, “in the month of March, my house, which stood where this stands, was consumed by fire, and almost all in the house went with it. The next month, my wife died, and in May, two of my sons went to wash some sheep, and one, in wading after a sheep that swam from him, was drowned. All this in about three months. When I looked to where my house stood, it was empty. When I looked into my field, where my son once labored, it was empty. When I looked into the house where I resided, after mine was burnt, and my wife was gone, it was empty ; and the whole world was empty ; and but for one thing, I should have despaired ; that was, when I looked to heaven, I could see an empty mansion, which

Jesus was then preparing for me ; this gave me comfort, under all my troubles and losses." This account was interesting to me. Well is it for all who are in trouble, if they can say, "Jesus has gone to prepare a place for me."

## CHAPTER XVII.

The morning after the meeting closed, I set out with Elders Peak and Leland, for Manchester, to see Elder Joseph Cornwall, who at that time lived there ; he has since resided in Providence, R. I. and last year, 1814, lived in Galaway, N. Y. We put up with him on Tuesday evening, and appointed a meeting for the two Elders at his meeting house, at 3 o'clock the next day. I was remarkably pleased with him, his family, and the order of his house. In the morning his sons came in from the field, and all the family came together. One of his sons read a chapter, and shut the bible. He asked the two preachers if they had any remarks to make on what had been read. They said they had none. He then remarked on the different things recorded in the chapter, and made a suitable application, addressing himself to his children, who appeared to bear with attention and approbation. He then proposed for one to pray. Elder Leland prayed, and then each of the family went their ways. The practice of reading the scriptures in a family, when it can be done, is of great advantage to



children and youth, as well as to the aged. The foundation laid in my mind for retaining the scriptures, was laid by hearing the scriptures read in my father's family, from year to year. Each one will generally remember some part of what is read. Elder Cornwall, who at that time was considered a man of considerable information, conversed freely, in the forenoon, upon various parts of the scriptures, which to me was both edifying and instructive. In the afternoon we went to the meeting-house, where several people had collected. Elder Leland preached first, from Gal. iii. 29, "*And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*" As near as I now recollect, he shewed, 1. What it was to be Christ's. 2. The peculiar privileges of all such; which consisted in two things. 1. They were Abraham's seed. 2. They were heirs according to the promise. He spake well, and to the general satisfaction of those who heard. As soon as he had done, Elder Peak undertook to preach from Col. iv. 18, "*Grace be with you.*" He endeavored, 1. To describe Grace. 2. To shew the meaning of "*Grace be with you.*" He had but little understanding of the subject, and at that time not preaching grace enough to speak freely and profitably upon the subject, he labored to but little profit for about half an hour; and as he found he could not go on freely with the subject, he sat down, greatly mortified. All seemed to pity him, but this did not make up for the mortification he felt at that time. After meeting we

went to Elder Cornwall's and tarried till the next morning. In the evening, Elder Cornwall conversed with him upon the subject of preaching, and told him he did not study enough, and that he ought to give himself more to the work. All this only added afflictions to the afflicted. Elder Peak wept, sobbed, sat sometime in silence, and almost concluded never to preach again. In the morning we set out for Chester, but Elder Peak had a sorrowful day. Sometimes he wept, and lamented his ignorance and poverty, his being confined to his goose, lap-board, and shears, the straitened situation his family was then in. Sometimes he would ride behind us out of sight, for several miles; and at other times ride in our company, without saying much. We endeavored to comfort him, but for many hours, he refused to be comforted. Towards night he felt better, concluded he would improve what he had, bear his burden, preach, and make clothes; and wait for the Lord to prepare something better for him, if he thought it best. That night we arrived at Chester; the next day we went to Windsor, and the day following I walked on foot from there to Woodstock. I had been gone about three weeks, of which the school committee made no complaint. This journey was very profitable to me, as it gave me an acquaintance with many preachers, and brethren; and gave me an understanding of many things in the scriptures which before were unknown to me. Instead of being more contented in my school,

my mind was the other way, and the duty of speaking publicly, pressed harder on me than before ; and I felt about determined to consent for once to speak in public at the earnest and repeated request of my brethren and friends.

On the 19th of July, 1790, when I was twenty one years, one month, and four days old, I appointed a meeting at the house of Deacon Laurence, who lived in the corner of Woodstock or Hartland. This appointment made some talk, as many concluded it was impossible for me to preach, because, they said, I had never said much in my whole life ; and they concluded, it was not likely I should say much then. Many times, after the meeting was appointed, I was heartily sorry that I had ever consented to it, but as it was appointed, I concluded to go, as it was in my mind, to be the first and last time. When the morning of that day came, the light to me was as the terrors of death. I went to the place appointed, and found a considerable number of people gathered, to hear what was to be said. After the usual form of beginning the meeting, I stood by the side of a low case of drawers, and read this for my text ; John v. 39, “ *Search the scriptures.*” I mentioned seven particulars respecting the text. 1. The necessity of the scriptures. 2. The integrity of them. 3. The truth of the scriptures. 4. The evidence of their being from God. 5. The plainness of the scriptures. 6. The perfection of the scriptures. 7. The duty enjoined on all, which is to search the

scriptures, because in them we think we have eternal life. These particulars I took up regularly, one after another, and illustrated them according to the best of my understanding at that time. I remained in about one position, through the whole time of speaking. My arm remained on the drawers, my feet in one place, and being easily daunted, I do not know that for once my eyes were on the assembly. After speaking about one hour, I sat down. After the meeting was closed, the people retired for about an hour, and came together to hear again of this matter. Some said at noon, "whence hath this man these things, having never known letters;" some said one thing and some another, though I believe the people in general, thought it was my duty to speak publicly, and that it had been for some time. I told the brethren they must improve in the afternoon, as I had no more to say. They urged me hard to speak but I utterly refused, as I had no more to say, and meant to stop from that time. The afternoon was spent in singing, prayer and exhortation. At the close of the meeting they urged me so hard to meet with them the next first day, that I consented to appoint the meeting. I returned to my school, and through the week felt ashamed, mortified, vexed, and at times sorry that I had so exposed my ignorance in speaking, and my folly in appointing to go again; as my speaking made a general stir through that part of the town, and people in



general were calculating to go to the next meeting.

When the day came, I went according to appointment, and almost the whole city came together to hear what the stripling had to say. My mind was very free while speaking upon the gospel of Christ; I spake forenoon and afternoon upon one text. Many were led to say, "Whence hath this man these things?" I now believe the Lord stood by me, and that his spirit helped me. The singular freedom I then enjoyed, encouraged me to appoint another meeting at the same place, which I attended and enjoyed some comfortable evidence that the Lord had called me to bear witness to the truth. Soon after this, the church to which I belonged, who met in the north part of the town, requested me to meet with them; which request I complied with. At the time of my appointment, a young man from Strafford, Vt. came to preach part of the day. He began the forenoon meeting, and read for his text John, iii. 17, "*For God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*" His mind was much embarrassed, and after speaking about twenty-five or thirty minutes, he sat down, being unable to go through with the subject contained in the text. It appeared to me duty to speak a few words to the people, upon the text, which they attentively heard, and after prayer the meeting was closed. In the afternoon, I endeavored to give the meaning of what is written in Psalm cxliv.

15. Whether justice was done to the subject or not, many rejoiced while hearing, and the church appeared fully convinced that the Lord had called me to preach his gospel. One brother, by the name of Cady, came to me and taking me by the hand, with tears in his eyes, said,

*"Go preach my gospel saith the Lord,  
Bid the whole world my grace receive ;  
He shall be sav'd that keeps my word,  
He shall be damn'd that wont believe."*

He encouraged me to go on, saying, God would surely help me in such a glorious work.

Soon after this, the church approbated me, and gave me a recommendation, as one whom they believed was called of God, to preach his Son among the Gentiles. These things sometimes encouraged me to speak in public, though the greater part of the time, excepting while speaking, my mind was greatly depressed, as it appeared to me impossible for one of my natural, spiritual and acquired abilities, to be called to such an important work.

Through the months of July, August, and the fore part of September, I continued my school, and attended meeting on Sundays, and generally spake once or twice. Some time in September, about two months after speaking the first time, Elder John Peak, invited me to go with him to what was then called the Coos country ; as he was going to preach in several towns in that region. Having obtained leave to stop my school for three

weeks, I sat out with him and his wife. Our first meeting was at the house of a brother by the name of Grow, in Hartland, Vt. who is now a baptist Preacher. Here I endeavored to preach from Psal. xlv. 4, "*There is a river the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God.*" From the appearance of the assembly, the people were better satisfied than I was. From this we rode to Bradford, in Vt. Elder Peak preached in Piermont the day after. From Piermont we rode to Landaff, and visited Elder Stephen Rice, a baptist preacher. He was a worthy, good, spiritual man, and one whom God had abundantly blest to the conversion of many in that part of the country. The winter before this, there was a general revival in that town, and a large number of old and young, were turned to the Lord; many were baptised by Elder Rice, and at the time we visited there, were very happy in the Lord. Soon after our arrival there a meeting was appointed for me, in a barn, as there was no other convenient place to meet. A considerable number of people met, for such a new country. Among the many was a clergyman by the name of Allen, who went by the name of one handed Allen, because he had lost one hand. He afterwards settled in Wolfborough, N. H. His appearance in the meeting greatly agitated my mind for a few minutes; for at that time I thought that a clergyman knew more than other men, though I have since learned that they are in general ignorant of the things of the spirit of

God. Notwithstanding the tremor I was thrown into for a few minutes, my mind was free, and I was enabled to preach the gospel to the acceptance of those who heard. Being so young, people were more attentive to hear, than though the same things had been said by an older person.

After enjoying a pleasant season there, in public and private meetings, we returned to Haverhill, and attended meetings there, in Piermont and in Bradford. On the first day of the week, I spake to the people in Bradford; many attended, and though the word was sown in weakness, a blessing attended it. My mind was particularly led to speak upon the last judgment; this part of the subject caused great solemnity on the minds of many, and several, who afterwards related what God had done for them, dated their first awakening from that meeting.

From that meeting, we rode to Canaan, in the state of Newhampshire, to attend an association of the baptists, held there the last Wednesday of Sept. 1790. Here I met Elder Beckwith, of Marlow, a man I heard preach in Lyme, Conn. when about ten years old. Elder Thomas Baldwin who had been brought up in Canaan, and had that summer been preaching in Boston, attended the association, and there took his leave of the people, as he was soon to carry his family to Boston, no more to reside with them. Joshua Smith, who had been preaching in the east part of Newhampshire, attended at the same time.



Also, two sisters came with him from Newmarket, who were sisters to her who afterwards was my first wife. From Joshua Smith and the sisters, Hannah, and Deborah Burley, I first heard of that part of the country and of the reformation in that region. They first gave me an invitation to visit the country where they lived, which invitation I accepted, and visited them the next spring. The meeting of so many Elders and brethren at this association, was a great blessing to me, and greatly encouraged me to improve publicly, according to the ability given me.

After the association closed, I returned home to Woodstock, and engaged to continue my school for three months; and though in my journey, I had felt much encouraged to improve in public speaking, yet in a short time after my return, I felt resolved to speak no more in the name of Christ; not from want of love to him or his cause, but for want of what I considered suitable qualification for such an important work.

After giving up the idea of preaching any more, I became very unhappy indeed, and often considered myself the most wretched being on earth. It often appeared to me that it would not be so hard to submit to die, as it would be to submit to be a preacher. Sometimes I thought I would die rather than submit to such an employment.

For three weeks I remained silent, though constantly called upon from different directions to come and preach Christ to them.

What increased my trouble was this; my mind ran freely upon the scriptures, so that I could frequently say, "I am full of matter," and "the word was like a fire shut up in my bones, and I wished often to speak that I might be refreshed." At this time I attended Mr. Chapen's meeting, in my school house. Sometimes, after the people were gone out, I had a strong temptation to get under the house and there stay and die; that I might be out of that misery, endured by refusing to speak the word of the Lord.

Often I spake to my scholars, upon the scriptures, but fearing they would call it preaching, I would stop short of communicating what was in my mind. Frequently, when deep sleep was upon me, I would be in an assembly of people, preaching the gospel to them. When I awoke, these questions would often arise: Why am I so troubled about that I ought not to do? Why does my mind run thus upon the scriptures? Why am I preaching when asleep, and silent when awake? If it is right for me to remain in silence, why so troubled about it?

In the course of this time, Elder William Grow, the man who baptised me, came to my father's house, and asked my mother where Elias was. She replied, "He is keeping school." "How long," said he, "has he engaged for?" She replied, "for three months." He said, "He will not keep school three weeks." "Why?" said my mother. "Because," said he, "he has no business there ;

he ought to be preaching ; I shall pray him out of the school-house, for I pray for him every time I go into my closet, and God has promised me an answer to prayer.”

At this time, several of my brethren told me it was wrong for me to hide my talent in the earth, when so many wished to hear me. My reply was, that after Peter had preached awhile, he left preaching and followed fishing, until Jesus came and commanded him the second time ; and that if ever I had an evidence of being commanded again, I would go and preach, otherwise I should attend to my school.

Three weeks from the time of beginning my school, and giving up preaching ; on Monday evening, after much trouble of mind through the day, I dreamed that I was at the house of my uncle, George Ransom ; that while sitting at his window, I saw a man riding, and leading an horse. The man appeared to me to be Samuel Stone, of Piermont, son of Major Stone, at whose house I had preached, when on the journey with Elder Peak. I dreamed that he came to the house and enquired for me. When he came into the room, I dreamed of asking him when he came from home, where he was bound, &c. He told me that he came after me to go to Bradford to preach ; that my preaching was greatly blest there, and that his orders were not to return without me. I dreamed of telling him I could not go, as I had engaged a school ; and further, that I had entirely done

preaching, for three weeks. Being over-persuaded by him to go a few miles, I dreamed that he kept me along, until we both came to the house of Deacon Rowel, in Bradford, where I had attended meetings before. Also, in my dream I thought many people were gathered, expecting me, and that the bible and psalm book lay on the table, and that one of the brethren observed, that they were all before God to hear what he had to say to them by me. I dreamed that these things greatly affected me, and that while endeavoring to preach, the power of God was manifested, and myself, and the assembly, were convinced that the Lord had called me to preach in Bradford. When I awoke in the morning, my dream greatly affected me, but I concluded, as dreams came through the multitude of business, this must originate in that way, and so put it off as much as possible, at that time. I attended my school through the day, though with an heavy heart. When the afternoon school was done, I went to my uncle's house, where I dreamed the man came for me, and sat down by the window where I dreamed of seeing the man who came after me. I had not sat long before a man came round the end of the school-house, on an horse, leading another by his side. The moment he appeared in sight, my dream came to mind; but I concluded that could not possibly be the man dreamed of the night before. He had not advanced far toward the house, before I was convinced it was Samuel



Stone, of whom I had dreamed. The sight of him greatly agitated my mind, as I was very certain he had come for me, though no such thing was mentioned when in that part of the country. My first thought was to secret myself; but I concluded to meet him boldly; but utterly refuse to go with him. After coming in and setting a short time, I asked him if he was going a journey, or if he had been one. He replied that he came from home the day before, and that he had come for me to go to Bradford, and had orders not to return without me. I told him his tarry would in my view, be long if he waited for me. He then related to me the situation of the people in that part of the country, the effect my improvements had on the minds of many who heard, and also the earnest desire of the people to see me there again. My objection to his proposal was that I had given up the idea of preaching, and in addition to that had engaged a school, which I could not leave. He at once proposed to see the committee, hoping to gain their consent for me to be gone two weeks. He saw them, and they consented upon this condition, that I should go and visit them, and if I thought it duty when I returned to continue my school, to do so, if not, they would give up for me to leave the school to go and preach the everlasting gospel. One objection was now removed, but the greatest was in myself. I had done preaching in my own mind, and knew not how to begin again. From the time Mr.

Stone came into the house, until I consented to go with him, this place of scripture pressed hard upon me, as though whispered to me by a kind friend: Acts, x. 20, "*Go with them doubting nothing, for I have sent them.*" These words had a favorable operation upon my mind, and encouraged me to go with the man.

In the evening we went to my father's house, and laid the matter before my father and mother; they both concluded it best for me to go. On the morrow we set out and went as far as Hartford, about ten miles from Woodstock. My mind was much distressed on account of what was before me. I slept but little that night. In the morning we went on our way for Piermont. We stopped by the way to rest our horses, and in that time, in opening my bible, my eyes fixed first on these words: "*And the souls of the people were discouraged, because of the way.*" This seemed to point out my case. While pursuing my journey through the day, I wept some, prayed some, talked a little, wished I had either continued preaching, or refused to go with the man. Just as the sun went down, we arrived at Major Stone's house in Piermont. He and his family were heartily glad to see me, and did every thing in their power to cheer my drooping spirits. At that time many things arose in my mind, calculated to trouble me. My youth, ignorance of letters, the world, the scriptures, and the work of preaching, all served to damp my mind.

Among other things, that of obtaining a living in the world was of some weight with me. At that time I had not the most distant thought of ever being supported as a preacher. My former calculation was to preach what I could, and attend to my school for a living. At this time I was cut off from that. As I sat musing on these things, and considering the difficulties which might attend me as a stranger, and far from my father's house, I opened a bible which lay on the table near where I sat; the first words I looked at were these. Matthew xix. 29, "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life." As I had been taught that the scriptures had a spiritual meaning besides what they said, I concluded this could not be literally true; though experience taught me in a few years that Jesus meant as he said when he spake this to his disciples; for from that day to this, I have found an hundred fold in all these things promised to the followers of the Lamb. There is no other business, excepting the work of preaching the gospel, that will cause a man to be treated as though he was in his own house, and among his relations. This is a great encouragement to the ministers of the gospel.

I arrived at Piermont, on Saturday. The next morning, we went across the river, to Bradford, to the house of Deacon Thomas

**Rowel.** As I entered the door, I saw the table, bible, and psalm-book, in the same place where I dreamed they were. This struck my mind with great solemnity, as I believed it was the mind of God, for me to go there to preach. As I entered the room, a joy seemed to be diffused through the assembly. Though the people appeared glad, I was far from rejoicing. After singing and praying, I spake about half an hour, from Rom. x. 15, "*And how shall they preach except they be sent ?*" My mind was led to speak of the great and important work of preaching, and the necessity of being sent of God, to do the work acceptably to God, and profitable to men. Nothing uncommon appeared in the assembly at that time, and my doubts as to the duty of preaching, were not in the least removed.

In the afternoon, I spake upon Heb. xiii. 2, "*Be not forgetful to entertain strangers ;* in the following manner : 1. Described the strangers. 2. Considered the duty enjoined, which was to entertain them. In speaking upon the first particular, four kinds of strangers were mentioned. 1. Such as are in a country or place where they are unknown by the inhabitants, whom they know not. "*Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things that are come to pass there in these days.*" Luke xxiv. 18. 2. Natural men. Eph. ii. 19, "*Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners.*" 3. Saints. 1 Peter, ii. 11, "*Dearly beloved,*



I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims." 4. Jesus Christ. Matth. xxv. 35, "I was a stranger, and ye took me in." In speaking upon the second particular, I endeavored, according to my ability, to shew the duty men owed to all these strangers. Although I do not now think the author of the text had reference to all these strangers, yet they are all mentioned in the scriptures; and a preacher is always safe in preaching more than is in his text, if he does not preach more than is noted in the scriptures of truth. How many there are who not only tell more than is in their text, but more than is in the bible, and even contradict plain declarations, and wrest the scriptures to their own destruction; handling the word of God deceitfully!

In that meeting my mind was uncommonly enlarged, to my own astonishment, and of many who heard the word. There was such a flowing river, that I continued two hours in speaking, and my speech dropped upon them, and they waited for it, as for the rain. I was convinced then that nothing but the power of the spirit of God, could enable me to speak in such a manner. Viewing my own ignorance, I could say with Daniel, that there was nothing in me more than any man living; but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets. The assembly in general, were to appearance moved, as the trees are moved by the wind. Several were made sensible of their dangerous situation as strangers to God, and within a few weeks, became, by faith in

Christ, fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.

The enlargement of mind, freedom of thought, ease in communicating, and power of truth which was then felt by me and many others, served at that time to remove all my doubts respecting being called of God to preach the gospel of Christ. Through the following week my mind was calm, and happy among the children of God, with whom I often met. The next first day, I attended a meeting at Piermont, and the week following returned to Woodstock, called my scholars together, and bid them an affectionate and final farewell as their school-master, expecting never more to meet them. This parting was trying to me, and grievous to the children and their parents. I then took my leave of parents, brethren, sisters, friends, house and land, and the town where I had endured and enjoyed more than in any other place on earth; and from that day to this, November 13, 1815, it has never been an home to me. The day of leaving my father's house for Christ's sake, to preach his gospel, with the promise of an hundred fold in this world, and life everlasting hereafter, I sung them the following hymn :

I hear the gospel's joyful sound,  
An organ I shall be,  
For to sound forth redeeming love,  
And sinners' misery.

My due affections I'll forsake,  
My parents and their house ;

And to the wilderness betake,  
To pay the Lord my vows.

Honored parents fare you well,  
My Jesus doth me call ;  
I leave you here with God until  
I meet you once for all.

Now through the wilderness I'll run,  
Preaching the gospel free ;  
O, be not anxious for your son,  
The Lord will comfort me.

And I'll forsake my chiefest mates,  
Which nature doth afford ;  
And wear the shield into the field,  
To wait upon the Lord.

And if through preaching I should gain,  
True subjects to my Lord ;  
'Twill more than recompense my pain,  
To see them love his word.

My soul doth wish Mount Zion well,  
Whate'er becomes of me ;  
There my best friends and kindred dwell,  
And there I long to be.

This was an affecting parting to us all, as we never expected again to live together on earth. Leaving my father's house, and all on earth I held dear, caused a great solemnity on my mind ; but believing God had commanded me thus to do, I passed on my way with a solemn cheerfulness ; hoping to turn many to righteousness, and at last to shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars forever.

The second day after leaving my father's house, I arrived at Maj. Stone's, in Piermont,

where I was heartily received as a messenger of peace, whom they believed was sent to publish salvation, and to say unto Zion, "Thy God reigneth."

## CHAPTER XVIII.

At this time I was very poor, and destitute of every thing excepting one coarse suit of clothes, which I wore every day. My hat was quite old, my coat of serge thin, and my outside garment quite coarse and considerably worn. I had neither horse, saddle, or bridle; nor one cent of money on earth to call my own. I went out without either scrip or purse; had I owned them, they would have been useless. Though I had something to leave, there was nothing for me to loose, for I owned nothing in this world, excepting my few clothes, a bible, Osterwald's theology, Edwards history of redemption, and a few very small books; and being constantly employed, either in reading, travelling, or preaching, there was no time to work and earn any thing for myself. Many young preachers at this day, who give an evidence of being called to the work, sometimes think their lot is hard, when they own an horse, and many other things which I never thought of possessing at that time.

After spending a few weeks in Piermont, Bradford, and Haverhill, I journeyed on a borrowed horse to Bath, Landaff, and New-



Concord, and endeavored to preach Christ among the people, according to the best of my ability. In Landaff, and the region round about, there had been a glorious revival of religion, under the preaching of Elder Stephen Royce, a man whom God delighted to honor. After a few days, I returned to Haverhill, and tarried till some time in December. Having been gone from my father's house about six or seven weeks, I felt a strong desire to visit them. One of the brethren, John Page, who now resides at Haverhill corner, lent me his horse, and Col. Huchins, gave me half a crown, which is 55 cents. This was the first money I ever received as a preacher, and it was then more to me than 55 dollars would now be. With this sum I set out for Woodstock. The first day I preached at William Dana's house, in Lebanon; and the second day arrived at my father's house. The distance from Haverhill to Woodstock is about fifty miles, which took me always two days to ride.

I was gone from Piermont [about two weeks; and in that time, the enemies of the cross of Christ, raised their first evil reports about me. It was said that a certain Doctor S. reported that some very reproachful circumstances called me back to Woodstock. It was also reported that brother Page had lost his horse, and that his young minister had played him a trick, &c.

I returned from Woodstock at the time appointed, and was for some time much cast

down, on account of the evil reports in circulation about me. This was what I had not calculated upon then. I then thought it trial enough to leave all to preach, without having such malicious lies circulated about me. Experience soon taught me the truth of this saying: Phil. i. 29, "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on his name, but also to suffer for his sake." From that day to this, twenty-five years, wicked men have been raging waves, foaming out their own shame; but having their bounds set, they have proceeded no further. They go no further than high water mark, break against the rock, and retire.

In the months of January, February and March, I was chiefly employed in reading and committing the new-testament to memory; with preaching about three or four times each week. Committing that book to memory, was a weariness to the flesh. I read other books some, was favored with an old and imperfect concordance, written by one Gouge, in the sixteenth or seventeenth century. This, with Canne's quotation bible, helped me to compare the scriptures together, and to understand the harmony there is between the prophecies and their accomplishment recorded in the new-testament.

By the middle of April, I had committed to memory almost every chapter, from the first of the Epistle to the Romans, to the last chapter of Revelation; and by being almost constantly employed for twenty-five years in

reading, writing, or preaching the new-testament, the greater part remains fresh in memory to this day.

In the course of this winter, Elders Aaron Leland, from Chester, Vt. and Joseph Call, from Woodstock, visited me. Elder Leland was then the most popular preacher, among the baptists in that part of the country. His preaching had an encouraging effect on the people, and it much discouraged me. I looked to myself, when he was preaching as the ten spies did; when they stood before the sons of Anack; like grasshoppers. His preaching preached away my knowledge, voice and all; and while hearing him, I thought it would never do to try again.

At first I had no idea of systems of doctrine, as they are called. My work was like that of Michael, to shew the people that which was noted in the scriptures of truth. Of course I preached the gospel freely, to all who came to hear. Elder Leland was the first man who told me the necessity of a system of doctrine; which afterwards was so great a torment to me. Once, in his hearing, I spake upon Matth. xxi. 24, "*And whosoever shall fall on this stone, shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder.*" After meeting, as I was riding with him to Haverhill, he said, "You must have a system of doctrine: you have none now. You will find the necessity of being dectrinated." I told him of *theology*; this he recommended *24* times.

cellent thing. This book I once committed to memory, and it gave me the same knowledge of the scriptures, that the moon does of the light of the sun. If the sun makes the moon shine, surely the sun in sight, will give more light, than when out of sight it shines on the moon. This is the most I ever received from bodies and systems of divinity. What he said, took such hold of me, that it was laid up in my memory, and attended to afterwards, with many grievous consequences, which shall be noticed hereafter.

Elder Joseph Call, was what was called there a small preacher, though a good man. His preaching was blest to the comforting of many, as he came to Haverhill about the time the congregationalists separated from the baptists, and held their evening meetings in another house; and in addition to this, acted towards the baptists as persecutors sometimes act. At the first meeting after the separation, Elder Call preached at John Page's house, from these words: Hebrews, x. 36. "*For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.*"

Some time in the winter, a man came there from Hawk, N. H. who belonged to the baptist church in Brentwood, where Dr. Samuel Shepard lived and preached. He gave me some account of the doctor, and the baptist brethren in that part of the country. This brother spake some in public, and in Bradford delivered a curious discourse upon the "*Tree of life,*" mentioned in Revelation



xxii. 2, which bore twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month. As I then understood him, the tree meant Christ; and he said the tree had three roots to it, which were the three persons in the trinity. The tree and its branches being the humanity of Christ, which grew from the three roots. He said it was rooted in heaven and grew downwards, so that the boughs reached to the earth. The tree then appeared to me, wrong end upward, and so it looks now. Such preaching in that day was more acceptable than true. The brother meant well, though I do not believe such a tree ever existed, excepting in the imagination of such as are in a mistake. Among others who visited me that winter, was my mother, her sister, and my uncle, (who caused me to be sprinkled,) and his wife. They tarried one night where I lived, and went to Lyman to visit some relations. While they were there, I had a meeting at the house of Samuel Way, who married a cousin of mine. My text was this: Hebrews ii. 3, "*How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?*" The discourse upon the text was according to the best of my knowledge; but how near to the scriptures is not possible for me to tell. One thing I remember which was this; "that men would be lost, if they neglected the great salvation." After the people were gone, my uncle in the presence of the family, and the friends with us, asked me this question. "On what does the salvation of the sinner turn?" I could not then possibly

give him an answer that would satisfy myself, and wished him to answer his own question. He observed, that it was true that men were commanded to repent and believe the gospel, and that they would be damned if they did not; and that their condemnation was for their wickedness; and it was said if they believed they should be saved; yet said he, this is not the turning point; for all do reject the gospel, and make light of it. Therefore the turning point of a sinner's salvation is this; "The electing love of God. All refuse, and some shall receive. This makes it, I will, and you shall. If it was not for sovereign grace, and the compelling power of God, no one would be saved." Not knowing any better then, I supposed he was correct and my silence was consenting to his death doctrine for that time.

Through that winter, I had some happy refreshing seasons, and some trying scenes to pass through. Several, in the course of the winter, were happily converted, and rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. The greatest difficulties I had to encounter were within myself. Sometimes my mind would be so shut up, that it seemed impossible for me ever to speak publicly again; though I never met an assembly, without having something to say to them from the scriptures of truth. The most trying thing I endured, was that concerning my being born again. Some time in March, my mind was greatly troubled, fearing I was never born of the spirit; though

I had before this been favored with such great and glorious manifestations of the spirit of God.

Such was the state of my mind in the fore part of April, that for three weeks, I did not pretend to preach, and concluded never to speak in public again, until I had an evidence of being born of the spirit. Though I had ever remembered the time, when the glory of God shone into my heart, yet I was often afraid, that was not what the bible called regeneration. For two or three weeks, I spent the greater part of my time in the fields or groves, in reading, praying, and examining whether I was in the faith or not; being determined to be satisfied for myself before I ever preached again. By comparing what was made manifest to me, what evidence was in myself, and the exercises of my mind, with what was said upon these things in the scriptures, it became a settled fact with me, that I had passed from death to life. Being thus established upon a point, which to me appeared of all the most important for a preacher of the gospel, I took fresh courage to preach that gospel which had been to me the power of God unto salvation.

## CHAPTER XIX.

Close application to study through the winter, speaking often which fatigued me considerably, with trouble of mind, brought me very low, and many of my friends were much alarmed, fearing I should go into a decline. Consulting for my welfare, and usefulness, they concluded it best for me to journey to the east of Newhampshire; thinking that a relaxation from study, the sea air, change of climate, &c. might be beneficial.

The brethren in Bradford, Piermont, and Haverhill, contributed seven dollars and fifty cents, to bear my expence on the journey. The fifty-five cents, given me in November before, I kept till then, having no occasion to spend it until this journey. The people in that part of the country, had given me so much besides, as enabled me to purchase a watch, pair of boots, and some other small articles of clothing. Brother John Page gave me the journey of a poor cross horse, which answered well for me. In the month of April, 1791, when in my twenty-second year, I set out from Haverhill corner, for the eastern part of Newhampshire; having the September before, seen some young people from Newmarket who gave me an invitation to visit that part of the country.

My journey then seemed some like that of Jacob's, when he sat out alone, and journeyed through the wilderness toward Padan Aram.



My calculation was, to make a short visit in that part of the country; see the brethren, and return back to preach in Bradford, Haverhill, and the regions around. In Bradford the baptists were framing a meeting-house, which they meant to have ready for me to preach in at my return. The house stands unfinished to this day. The first day of leaving Haverhill, I rode to Rumney, about twenty miles from Haverhill. Here lived Elder Cotton Hanes, a baptist preacher, with whom I tarried that night. He received me courteously, and being well acquainted with the eastern part of Newhampshire, gave me directions in writing, as to the road to Newmarket, and where to find brethren to put up with on the way. The second day, Friday, I rode to Salisbury, N. H. and put up with Abel Morrill. His wife was a member of the baptist church in Brentwood. Being recommended to them by Elder Hanes, they kindly received me, and refreshed me according to my needs, and wished me to stop and preach with them; but my mind was to go farther. The next day I rode to Allenstown, and put up on Saturday evening at a tavern, kept by Ede Hall Burgin, a baptist brother. In Concord, ten miles from Allenstown, as I waited for the boat to cross the Merrimack river, a clergyman from Pembroke, near Concord, by the name of Zacheus Colby, came across the river to the side where I was waiting. As he came out of the boat, he looked earnestly at me and

said, "Sir, I thought whether you were not a clergyman; I beg leave to ask." My only reply was, no.

A clergyman at that time, was almost as great an abomination to a *baptist minister*, as a shepherd was to the Egyptians in the days of Jacob. He said no more, but passed along, and I crossed the river, pleased to have no more to do with a clergyman besides saying, *no*. At that time, I was uncommonly shy of a clergyman; for the old baptist ministers had told me some unfavorable things about them. They told me that when I saw a man dressed in *black*, called *reverend*; reading his notes; having a salary; taking property from others by force; and despising such as travelled and preached, &c. that such were the *devil's ministers*, and ought to be avoided. This I believed, and shunned them, and when I lived to see the baptist ministers making the same appearance; wearing the same titles; using notes; and taking a salary, that was forced from the people; the instructions they had given me, caused me to leave them and keep separate as I had from the clergy before them. Reflecting on the character of the clergy, I passed on to Allentown. Though Elder Hanes had directed me to put up with brother Burgin, I called at his house as a stranger, and asked for entertainment till Monday, which was readily granted. My horse was taken care of, and by my request a good supper provided for

me. I began no conversation with the family, nor they with me for some time.

Not long after supper, there came in a very large, important looking man, who with an air of importance walked to the table, laid down his three cornered hat, gloves and whip, and walked towards the fire ; a chair being handed him, he sat down. Soon after he sat down, Hall Burgin, son of Ede Hall Burgin, came in, and speaking, called him Mr. Remington. I soon found he was a clergyman from Candia, the town east of Allentown ; that he was going to supply Mr. Colby's place at Pembroke, and that another clergyman was to occupy his pulpit the next day. Seeing two clergymen in so short a time, I concluded they must be very plenty in that part of the country, if they were not useful. Living in Vermont, a climate not suited to their *constitution*, (ignorance, bondage, oppression and fleecing,) I had never seen but a few of them. As it was dark, and five miles from Pembroke, Hall Burgin asked him to tarry till morning, his father being absent ; this invitation the clergyman readily accepted, took off his great coat, and sat down with the company.

As this was almost the first time of my being in the company of a clergyman, I was determined, if possible, to find out what kind of a being a clergyman was. He had not set long before he began to talk with Nancy, a daughter of brother Burgin. His first conversation was about Joshua Smith, a young



man who had the year before been remarkably blest in preaching in that part of the country. Next he mentioned Dr. Shepard, a baptist minister, who had preached and baptised in that part of the country. The whole family were attached to him, and Nancy with her parents and one brother and sister, were members of the church where he preached. His opposition to the Doctor was displeasing to the whole family, and caused Nancy and others of the family to raise some weighty arguments in his favor. He appeared to possess a bitter spirit against the Doctor, and the whole denomination of the baptists.

His next subject was *baptism*. He made many objections against baptism as described in the new-testament, which Nancy answered in a scriptural manner. He said considerable against new-testament baptism, and in favor of sprinkling children. She urged him to produce a *command* or *example* from the new-testament, that an infant was ever sprinkled or baptised. This he could not do; but undertook to prove it from circumcision. He stated something like this: "Abraham was a believer and circumcised his children; believers are commanded to do as Abraham did; therefore believers ought to have their children baptised, after the example of Abraham who circumcised his children." This kind of false argument looked so glaring to me, that I thought it duty to let him and the family know I was awake, and instantly raised up my head from my arm, and stated to Mr.



Remington that his propositions respecting infant baptism were false, and that they could not be supported by the scriptures, nor the rules of logic. He was not a little moved at such an attack from one whom he thought had been asleep during the time of his discourse with Nancy. My speech with him drew the attention of the family to hear what the stranger had to say upon the subject. My mind was prepared to converse with him, having previously heard his arguments, and found him not of all the most accomplished, as to natural, acquired, or spiritual abilities.

He again insisted on the correctness of his statements, as to Abraham and circumcision. I then said, "Sir, you make false sylogism." He said, "Do you understand logic?" I said, "My understanding of it is such as to know when a man makes false sylogisms." He paused a little at this. I then said, "Sir I can better prove from plain scriptures put together, that you ought immediately to hang yourself, than you have proved infant baptism from circumcision." Said he, "You cannot do this, if you can I will give up." I then stated this to him: "And cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself." "Is this scripture?" "Yes," said he. "Go thou and do likewise." "Is this scripture?" "Yes," replied he. "What thou doest, do quickly." "Well," said he, "you have made it out." I then said, "Do you from this believe you ought to hang yourself?" He

said, "No I do not." My reply was, "Neither do I believe in infant sprinkling from your manner of proving it from circumcision, which has no reference to any kind of baptism."

The subject of hanging, placed the clergyman in a state of suspense, and there he hung the remainder of the evening, and perhaps till he died, which was sometime in the year 1814. Before we retired, he delivered a kind of cold formal prayer, as it seemed to me. When we went into the room where we slept, he stated to me that he was thoroughly acquainted with *theology*, or systematic divinity, and was not afraid of being examined by any man, as he considered himself qualified to preach the gospel. To this I made no reply; but we slept in greater harmony than his propositions ever were respecting sprinkling children. As he went away early in the morning, we had no more conversation at that time. My proving that he ought to hang himself, or some other cause, fixed a distaste in his mind against me, which he retained to the day of his death, or near that time, as I have frequently been informed.

## CHAPTER XX.

After the conversation with Mr. Remington was ended, some of the family asked me if I was a preacher. I told them that I had sometimes spoken in public. They requested me to preach there the next day, as they

could notify the people in the morning. This was agreed on, and by meeting time, people were notified for several miles around. A considerable number came to hear the stranger, and were very attentive to hear the word. Several young people, who had lately been converted to God, spake in the assembly, and greatly comforted and confirmed my mind. On leaving Haverhill for the eastern part of the state, I expected to preach but little, and only to a few in some obscure corner; thinking that my knowledge, ability, and experience was such as to prevent my being much known in that part of the country; and at this meeting I was surprised to see the attention of the people, for they heard as if all said was entirely new to them. The meeting closed in a solemn and affecting manner, while many said we never heard such things before. In the evening, brother Burgin returned from Deerfield, having heard of the meeting. As I was determined to go on my journey on Monday, he proposed to go with me to Newmarket. This proposal was very acceptable to me, being a stranger to the way, the country, and the people.

He was a man who had professed religion for many years; was of the baptist denomination, and had ever been an honor to that religion he professed; though often cast down with doubts and fears respecting himself. His wife and children thought the journey would be profitable, and encouraged him to go. Monday forenoon we rode to Deerfield; had

a meeting at Enos Sanborn's house, and the next day at the baptist meeting-house. Wednesday morning we sat out for Newmarket, and arrived at the house of Josiah Burley, about two o'clock, P. M. All the family, excepting his wife, had gone to a meeting at Broadstreet Gilman's house, about one mile off. We took some refreshment, and went to the meeting. When we came into the house, a freewill baptist by the name of Daniel Lord, was speaking to the people, who were very attentive to hear him. After he had done, several men and women spake by exhortation, and many possessed joy unspeakable and full of glory. They sung several new hymns, which were refreshing to me. Brother Burgin told the man of the house, he had a preacher with him. He asked me to close the meeting by prayer ; this ended the meeting. A meeting was appointed for me the next day at Josiah Burley's house, where we returned and tarried that night. This was the first house I put up at in that part of the country. This house was my home about twenty years ; even from that day till the man and his wife both died. He afterwards became my father-in-law, and continued his friendship till death. This was the most remarkable family I had then ever seen. The man, his wife, four daughters, hired man, and a lad of about twelve years old, all gave an evidence of being converted to God. The first evening I was there, they sung, prayed, and conversed



freely upon the things of the kingdom of peace.

The next morning, I was awakened by the sound of some one praying, and the service of God engaged the minds of the whole family. At the meeting the next day, a large number of people attended, and it was to me an heavenly place in Christ Jesus. At this meeting Richard Martin, of Lee, who is now a preacher in Gilford, spake first in public, and declared what God had done for him. The Lord enabled me to preach his gospel to the poor. It was a strange thing to me, to see so many come so far to hear a lad speak, as I was then twenty-one years and nearly eleven months old; and considered myself the least of all who ever undertook to preach Christ.

At the close of the meeting, several of the brethren requested me to preach the next first-day at Dr. Shepard's meeting-house in Epping. As I had never spoken in a meeting-house, it was with much persuasion that they gained my consent to make the appointment. After much importunity, I consented to appoint the meeting. Being feeble, and in a low state of health, I had no more meetings that week. From that time till the next meeting, my mind was continually troubled about the meeting, and how I should be able to speak to the people. This difficulty has attended me from that day to this. When I have spoken once, I generally feel as though it was the last time of speaking. When

young, I expected to outgrow this difficulty ; but have not to this day. This text has been proved to me true, again and again : “ Without me, ye can do nothing.” And this I have also proved true : “ I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me.”

On the first-day of the week, the most people came together, I had ever spoken to before. When I entered the pulpit, trembling took hold on me, while looking at the pulpit, the people, and the importance of the business I was entering upon. The place of scripture I spake upon was this : Mark xvi. 15, 16, “ *And he said unto them, go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth, and is baptised, shall be saved ; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.*”

The word had a remarkable effect on those who heard ; such as I had never before seen while speaking to an assembly. Among the many who attended, was a *deist* by the name of Zebulon Dow. Before this meeting, he thought himself proof against all contained in the bible ; but in this meeting, he, like Goliath fell before an inferior, even a youth. In the afternoon, I spake upon Isaiah xxxiii. 20, “ *Look upon Zion the city of our solemnities.*” This afforded a subject of consolation to the followers of the Lamb. At this meeting, several from Lee, a town about four miles from Epping, earnestly requested me to preach there the next sabbath day. This request I complied with and gave public notice of the same.

After meeting, we went to Brentwood to see Dr. Shepard, the baptist minister, of whom I had heard so much. He received us kindly, and we tarried with him that night. The members of that church held an annual meeting on the first Monday in May, for the purpose of attending to the temporal affairs of the church. As that meeting was appointed the next day in Salisbury, Mass. the Doctor invited us to attend, as the brethren from different parts would have an opportunity of forming an acquaintance with me. Monday morning we set out early, and came to the place at ten o'clock, the hour appointed. The Doctor talked all the way ; I heard and retained all I could, without exposing much of my ignorance.

After the business of the meeting was over, it was proposed for me to preach. This proposal I complied with, in much fear and trembling. In the first of the meeting Dr. Shepard looked great to me, as I considered him possessed of great knowledge and myself very ignorant. I had not spoken long, before all my fear of him was gone. While speaking, he *wept, smiled, laughed, groaned, said Amen*, rose up, sat down, took off his wig, put it first on one side of his head, then on the other, and through the whole manifested his approbation of what was said. In that meeting, Jesus came down "like rain upon the mown grass." That night I put up with the Doctor at David Currier's house, at a place called Amesbury mills, where the same man now lives.

Tuesday, I rode to Stratham, a town near Newmarket, with an old brother by the name of Stephen Piper, tarried at his house that night, and preached at Deacon Moses Clark's, in that vicinity the next day, and at the baptist meeting-house on Thursday. In this town, Joshua Smith's preaching had been greatly blest, and an happy company of the youth were converted to God, with whom I was very happy during my stay with them.

While at Stratham, the brethren proposed to me to tarry in that part of the country, instead of the Coos country, where I had lived the winter before. Being wholly at liberty, I concluded to comply with their request, if they would provide me with an horse that I might return to Haverhill, deliver up the horse I then had, go to Woodstock, and return. This was agreed on at once, and on Friday, took Deacon Clark's horse, and went to Newmarket; Saturday went to Lee, according to appointment.

On the first day of the week, more people met than were at Epping the week before. They came from all quarters. My mind was greatly agitated while viewing the assembly which was composed of all ranks of people. What gave me the most unpleasant sensation was, to see an old man come into the pulpit with a large white wig upon his head. His presence made me tremble, as I had ever thought that ministers with white wigs were knowing men. I endeavored to trust in the Lord, and preach the preaching he bid me. I spake in



the forenoon from 2 Cor. v. 17, "*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.*" In the afternoon from Deut. xxxii. 2, "*My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil like the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and the showers upon the grass.*" This was a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. The brethren at Stratham gave me something to help me on my way, and the people at Lee did the same; and on Monday I set out for Coos, and Vermont; having one horse to ride, and another to lead.

Brother Burgin attended me through the greater part of this tour, and was so revived in his mind, and confirmed as to his evidence of being born of God, that when he returned home he told his wife he should never doubt again. I put up with him on Monday evening; and as the Newhampshire baptist association was to be holden in Brentwood the second Wednesday in the next month, (June,) I appointed to preach at his house the Sunday before that time, and went on my way the next day. I had but three or four weeks to perform my journey in, to be there by the time appointed. I went first to Haverhill, N. H. and delivered up the horse I rode, told the brethren the open door there was for me to preach in Stratham, and the regions around; and though it was disagreeable to them for me to leave that region, yet believing it duty, they gave me their fellowship in it, and a letter commending me to the brethren there as a brother, and

preacher of the gospel. From Bradford, I went to Woodstock, and related to my parents what had taken place, took my leave of them, returned to Haverhill, stayed a few days, and on Thursday before my appointment at Allenstown, set out in company with Elder Stephen Royce, for the eastern part of the state. We had a pleasant journey ; arrived at Allenstown on Saturday afternoon ; were kindly received by Brother Burgin and all his family. His house from that day to this, has ever been one of the hundred fold promised me when I first left all for Christ.

## CHAPTER XXI.

On the first day of the week, the people came from every direction, some rode twenty miles in the morning, and were there in season. The meeting was held in the barn, which was crouded with people. My text was this : John x. 4, "*And the sheep follow him.*" I did not think the people received much instruction from what was said ; for my mind was uncommonly embarrassed. This time of speaking brought to my mind what Elder Peak said, the first time he heard me speak in public. Said he, "preach, and calculate to preach some very poor sermons, because it is the best you can do."

Elder Royce preached in the afternoon, in a very solemn and impressive manner. The people manifested a general satisfaction

in the meeting ; and my preaching and the preacher appeared less than the least of all.

On Monday morning we had a solemn, weeping time, in parting from the family and friends present. It resembled that parting at Ephesus, when Paul took his leave of the Elders. We all kneeled down and prayed ; and after prayer, sung a parting hymn, composed by Elder Thomas Baldwin :

“ From whence doth this union arise,” &c.

Brother Burgin's wife was so overcome with the glory of the christian's union, that she cried aloud for joy ; giving glory to God for such a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. We rode to Deerfield that day, and to Newmarket the next. Wednesday morning we rode to Brentwood, about eight miles, to attend the association.

Here I met a number of baptist Elders, whom I had never seen before. The following I remember : Elder Hezekiah Smith, of Haverhill, Mass. Elder Thomas Green of Cambridge, Mass. Elder Bailey of Westmoreland, N. H. Elder Pilsbury of Northwood, Elder Chase of Amesbury, Mass. Elder Powers of Gilmanton, N. H. Elder Simon Lock of Coxhall, Me. and others whom I do not now recollect. A blessing attended, and followed this meeting. My whole work was to hear, and retain. There had been a revival of religion in that town, and in the towns around, and several converts attended the meeting.

Elder Bailey delivered the first discourse, from Rom. i. 16, "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*" He preached the gospel as it was, "the power of God." Many were much refreshed, and strengthened by the doctrine of the Lord. The business of the association took up the remainder of the day, after a few exhortations and some spiritual singing which followed the sermon.

The next day, Elder Thomas Green preached in the forenoon, from Zach. ix. 9, 10, "*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion, shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall speak peace unto the heathen, and his dominion shall be from sea, even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.*" He gave a description of Zion's King, his appearance on an ass; his mind, lowly; his nature, just; his message, salvation; the joy this was calculated to give. He explained the cutting off the chariot, horse, and battle bow, to mean that his religion did not need the sword to uphold it, nor human laws to be needful to support his doctrine, nor his ministers. His speaking peace to the heathen he said, meant preaching the gospel in all the



world ; and his extensive dominion, meant, that the time would come when all nations should call him blessed, and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord, and his Christ. I thought this was the greatest and best preaching ever delivered by man. It caused general joy to the saints, who received the doctrine as the earth drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it. That part which explained the cutting off the battle bow, was peculiarly pleasing to the baptists, for at that day they were opposed to being incorporated, to take property from people by force to support their ministers, as they have since done.

In the afternoon, Elder Royce preached ; but I do not now remember his text. His discourse was weighty and powerful ; and had a good effect on those that heard. Just as he was about to close his discourse, Nancy Burgin, (who had at her father's house, disputed Mr. Remington,) broke in upon him ; being so overcome by the glory of the subject, that she could no longer refrain from speaking. Expressing the joy of her heart, the glory before her, and the danger those were in who knew not God, caused such a movement among the people as I never before saw or felt. She continued speaking about ten minutes, in a very powerful manner, and the solemnity of things eternal evidently rested on the assembly. As soon as she sat down, Elder Hezekiah Smith rose up in the pulpit, and the first words he spake were these : " By the mouth of two or three witnesses every

word shall be established." After commending what Elder Royce and the young woman had said, which he considered as the voice of God to the people, he told them, that an important part of Paul's writing, lay with weight on his mind, which he felt constrained to mention, and speak a few words upon, which were these : Heb. xii. 25, "*See that ye refuse not him that speaketh.*" His words were with power ; and at that time he proved himself a son of thunder to the wicked, and a son of consolation to the saints. His description of the last day, and the awful end of such as refused the Saviour, had a deep and abiding effect on many, who to that day had lived without hope, and without God in the world. A glorious reformation took place in that town from that meeting ; and many wounded at that time, never rested, until they knew their Redeemer lived to save them from the wrath to come.

From that meeting I went to Newmarket, and the Sunday following, preached at the meeting-house in Lee. At this meeting, many more people gathered, than at the other time. After the meeting-house was so filled in every part, that no more could get in, they gathered round the house to hear. In the afternoon I spake upon these words, Isa. ix. 7, "*The Prince of Peace.*" One man by the name of Samuel Colcord, from Nottingham, about four miles off, who had long been troubled in his mind ; hearing of the meeting, came, hoping he might hear something that

would give him *peace*. While speaking of the Prince of Peace, who gave peace to such as believed in him ; even while he was hearing a description of that peace, received it in his own soul ; and was so filled with peace in believing, that the moment I closed, he cried out, "Glory to God for this peace, which my soul has received from the Prince of Peace !" His words were in demonstration of the spirit and with power. The whole assembly was moved, and many could say, "it is the Lord's doings, and marvellous in our eyes." He was baptised soon after, and to this day enjoys the same peace. I have often seen him since, and he always with joy mentions that time, and has shared largely in the same peace, and lives rejoicing in hope of seeing at last, the Prince of Peace, to enjoy his love forever.

The day I was twenty-two years old, which was not far from the time of this meeting at Lee, June 17, 1791, I was in Stratham, at the house of Richard Scammon. This was a very solemn day to me. The chief part of the day I was alone, in a retired place in his field. I had heard of some men who had made a covenant with God, to serve him all their days, and signed it with their blood, instead of ink. This I thought of doing, that I might feel myself more strongly bound to serve him to whom I owed my life, and every favor received. I finally concluded it not best to make such a covenant, but pray God to keep me from the evil in the world,



and enable me to be useful while I lived. My conclusion at that time was, that I had ever been an unprofitable servant, and as I did not expect to live many years, wished to live to God the remainder of my days.

About this time, the inhabitants of Danville, Vt. agreed to give me a call to settle with them as the minister of the town, and to give me the land which was designed for the first settled minister. The committee in behalf of the town, sent a letter requesting me to make them a visit on that account. The proposal of several hundred acres of land, had no kind of weight in my mind, as I had left all for Christ, and thought it wrong, and contrary to the new-testament, to accept of such an offer. Soon after this, one of the committee came to see me, to insist on my settling among them. I told him my mind was to travel and preach the gospel, and that his proposal would bind me, and prevent my doing what the scriptures directed. The idea was then given up ; and as the town would not agree in any other man, they divided into baptists and congregationalists, and as I was informed, divided the land. The baptists settled Isaac Root ; the others a man by the name of Fisk, who now resides there. Mr. Root turned universalist and left them. I never visited the people there till October, 1814, when I found what I wished for ; a great company to hear the gospel of the grace of God.



Not far from the time of entering my twenty-third year, the inhabitants of Lee requested me to preach with them a certain part of the time. I agreed to preach there two thirds of the time, and at Stratham one third. At Lee, the people were uncommonly desirous for me to settle as the town's minister ; this I could not do, as there was no such thing mentioned in the new-testament. They did every thing needful to make me contented among them. Their kindness I ever acknowledged, but could not comply with their request. One man, Capt. Hill, proposed to give me a suit of clothes, as mine were quite poor. He gave me an order on Samuel Hill, of Portsmouth, for all I asked for at his store. As it was a fashion for the *clergy* to wear *black*, he advised me to get that color. A *black mark* for a minister was never pleasing to me ; but as he desired it, I took his order and went to Portsmouth, N. H. and took *black* broadcloth for a coat, *black lasting* for waistcoat and small clothes, two pair of black stockings, one pair of black gloves, and a black round hat.

When taking the cloth from the merchant, I thought it looked more suitable to cover a coffin, than to dress a live man. I returned with my cloth, and shewed Capt. Hill the bill. He complained that I had not got better cloth, but I thought it good enough for such a poor ignorant preacher. My clothes were soon made, but I looked quite too black with them on. At this time I owned no horse, but a

baptist brother, Broadstreet Gilman, gave me the use of a good horse through the summer. In the fore part of August, I proposed a journey to Woodstock to see my parents. The horse lent me, was some worn down, and Samuel Williams, of Lee, gave me the use of his to perform the journey. As I passed through Salisbury, the people in the middle of the town, who had built a new meeting-house, in opposition to those on the south road, requested me to preach in their new house on my return ; this I agreed to, and appointed the meeting.

On my way from Salisbury to Canaan, it began to rain towards night, and rained uncommonly fast. For several miles there was no house to put up at, and very dark. I was more afraid of injuring my new clothes with the rain, than myself. Sometime in the evening, I came to an house where they were willing to keep me ; put my horse in the barn and retired to rest, without taking any food. My clothes were wet through, and the rain had run into my boots which were new, and quite too small when dry. I tried hard to pull them off with a jack, but could not. The only way I could do was to take off my coat, and sleep with my boots and other clothes on. In the morning, I arose and went on my way to Woodstock. My parents were not a little troubled to see me so richly dressed, and so well furnished with money. Their fear was, that such things might serve to lift me up, and lead me to forget my dependence. This I

knew was often the consequence of prosperity, and their admonitions were not wholly in vain.

## CHAPTER XXII.

After a short and agreeable visit, I returned to attend to my appointment in Salisbury. Many people from different parts of the town attended to hear the stranger and youth. As this was the first meeting ever held in the house, it being then unfinished, my mind was led to something which I thought would be suitable to the occasion. The text was this : 1 Kings viii. 27, "*But will God indeed dwell on earth ! Behold the heaven, and heaven of heavens, cannot contain thee ; how much less this house that I have builded ?*" My first proposition was to shew the greatness and glory of the Creator. Second, shew how he would dwell on earth, which was through the Mediator, and that there was no house that God would dwell in on earth, excepting in such as kept the commands of Jesus. The people were very attentive to hear, and appeared satisfied with the discourse.

Hearing that day, that Joshua Smith was to preach in Northfield, across the river from Salisbury, at 8 o'clock in the morning, I rode down to the river, and stopped at Col. Webster's, father of Daniel Webster of Portsmouth, a lawyer, and now, (1815,) member of Congress. From his appearance at that time,

I did not think he would ever make a public man, though it is so now.

Being dressed in black, Col. Webster supposed me a preacher, and asked me to abide with him till morning. He and his family treated me kindly. In the morning, I rode to Mr. Mills' house, where the meeting was appointed, and met the preacher who had lately come from Virginia. While I sat at breakfast, an old man came into the house by the name of Carter, from Canterbury. Mrs. Mills asked him to eat ; "No," said he, "I do not want such food, my soul is hungry for the bread of life ; I have not heard a gospel sermon this six months, and have come eight miles this morning to hear the gospel, and hope the meeting will begin soon." After meeting, I asked the old pilgrim if he had found any food ? "O, yes," said he, "I have had a feast of fat things full of marrow, and wines on the lees, well refined." My heart replied, "God grant that such hungry souls may ever be filled with good things." From this meeting I returned to Lee, and the region that lieth round about.

From this, Joshua Smith rode in company with me the greater part of the time for more than one year. About the first of September, he went to Sanborntown, fifty miles in the country from Stratham, with a brother, Samuel Pottle, who had relations in that town. His visit proved a great blessing to the family and many others. The man's name, where he had the first meeting, was Jonathan Chase.



The day they arrived, he had a daughter married. The minister who married them, Mr. Woodman, was there, and a large company of young people, who had calculated upon a very happy time at the wedding. Soon after supper, Joshua Smith began to sing some spiritual hymns, then he prayed, and soon began to tell the company the danger they were in, while in unbelief. His words took such hold of them, that they had no inclination for the diversion they had calculated upon. From this, he appointed another meeting for preaching, and many came to hear. In a short time, a considerable number were turned from darkness to light, and from the power of satan to God.

Joshua Smith returned to Stratham, and soon after we both went there and tarried some time. Afterwards a baptist church was constituted there; and a meeting-house built, which remains to this day. Soon after this, a young man in Northwood, by the name of John Crockett, was converted to God, and became a preacher. About one year after the church was gathered, he went to Sanborn-town to preach, and moved his family there, was ordained, and has remained there to this day, 1815. He has been blest with several revivals, and there is now a large church and congregation who meet in that house. At this time there is more life and freedom among them, than in any baptist church of my acquaintance in the state of Newhampshire.

The reformation which began in Sanborn-town, spread in different directions. In Meredith, the next town, many were converted to God. Elder Nicholas Folsom, of that town, was blest as an instrument of good, and baptised many in both towns. He was living in September, 1815, though quite advanced in years, and much benumbed with calvinism.

Not far from this time we visited Brookfield, and Middleton, in N. H. In Brookfield they had a lifeless clergyman settled for life, by the name of Piper. He piped to them a number of years, but no one danced that I know of, unless it was at the sound of the taxgatherer's demand. I am informed, that being tired with his sound, they hired him to desist from what they had hired him to do. In this visit to Middletown, I first saw Elder John Buzzel, a free-will baptist preacher, who now resides in Parsonsfield, Me. With him and the brethren there, we had a happy meeting; though Brother Smith troubled them a little with calvinism, a disorder which he was considerably troubled with himself, at certain times. This evil disease I never had till about one year after.

From this region we returned to Stratham and Lee. In the course of this season we went to a town called Hawke, in N. H. to hold a meeting at the house of Jonathan French. As we were on our way to the house, within one mile, in a small piece of wood, Brother Smith took up an half sheet of paper that lay in the road; which I then thought

was dropped on purpose for him, because he was a calvinist. The following is the amount of what the paper contained. "A gentleman in Virginia had a slave, that was a calvinist of the baptist denomination. One day the master undertook to interrogate the negro respecting his religion; and said "What do you believe concerning your God?" The negro said, "my God make great many folks; he make some to be saved and he make great many to be damned. He provide a Saviour for few; he tell them all to come to him and be saved. They cannot come, though he command them to come, and he damn them all if they no come. Some he make come, though they no wish to come; but when they come, they glad he make them come." Said the master, "do you love such a God, and delight to serve him?" "Yes master," replied the negro. Soon after this, the master took the negro, and tied him to a tree near the house, with his back to the tree. He then set a table a few feet from the tree, and set food on it, and invited his negro to come and eat. The negro said, "untie me first master." No, said he, come now. Next he commanded him to come. "Untie me master and I will come." Come first, said the master. Having invited, and commanded him to eat, he then threatened to whip him severely, if he did not obey, while tied fast to the tree. The negro cried, "master you know I can't come." The master in appearance began to grow angry, and took his whip, and told him

he would positively whip him if he did not go and eat the food in one minute. The slave begged heartily to be untied; but to no purpose. The master begun to whip him severely for not obeying him; and the negro cried out to his master for his cruelty. The master said, do you think I am doing right now? No, no, master, it is no right to whip so. Now, said he, this is the way you say your God does, commands all to come, when they cannot come. Give up such a thought of a God that is good to all, and punishes only such as transgress, when they might obey; give it up or I will whip you to death. The negro cried out, "master I no believe such religion any more." He then let him go, having convinced him of the wickedness of such doctrine, by the example of food he could not reach, and the solid arguments of the cow-skin."

Brother Joshua read it through, looked a little sour, said nothing; and handed me the paper, which I read and committed to memory. I told him it was dropped as a hint to him to preach consistently. We went to meeting, and I spake to the people from Isa. xii. 3. *"Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."*

During this year we travelled and preached in almost every town in the county of Rockingham. We went twice to Gilmantown, and preached in Elder Walter Powers' meeting house. Once we went to Portsmouth, where I now reside. There was a general revival



of religion through the county. As neither of us were ordained, the old baptist ministers, Dr. Shepard, Wm. Hooper, of Madbury, Pillsbury, Powers, and others, baptised. In Brentwood, Dr. Shepard baptised thirty-six in one day. We enjoyed heaven in our souls, and often sat together in heavenly places in Christ, with our brethren and sisters. Though we had nothing, yet we possessed all things, and knew no want of any good thing.

In the beginning of this winter, (1791,) the people in Lee wished me to preach with them two thirds of the time, and agreed for me to make my home with Eli Furber, at whose house I had generally resided when in Lee. This proposal I accepted, and preached one third of the time in Stratham. I did not travel much in the winter, but spent considerable time in reading the scriptures, and such books as I judged most useful. This winter I read Edwards history of redemption through, and became generally acquainted with Osterwald's christian theology, as it was called. In the month of January, my father came to visit me, and tarried till February. He went with me into different towns, and was greatly comforted, in seeing the brethren, and joining with them in songs of praise to God and the Lamb.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

This year, the chief dispute among the different denominations was respecting baptism, and what was called *close communion*. I had not much controversy with any one. My mind was fixed as to baptism, from the new-testament, which declared that the command was enjoined only on believers, and that the mode was burying in water. As to close communion, I took that to be right, because the denomination to which I belonged held so. There was some difference between what was called calvinistic, and free-will baptist. As I was ignorant of the free-will baptist, and understood they held to saving themselves, it went so in my mind without making much enquiry about it.

Among the calvinistic baptists, there were two kinds. One part hold that Christ died for the elect only, and that there was no possibility of salvation to any others. The other part hold that Christ died for all, or made such an atonement for all as to make it consistent to preach to all, and call on all to repent and turn to God, and at the same time they held that a certain part were given to Christ, and that those would and should come, and that no others ever would be saved. They stated that all had an offer; that all refused, and then as Dr. Shepard termed it, "*God gave that to some, that he owed to none.*" Though after this, I held to *calvinism*, yet I always believed the gospel was to be preached to eve-

ry creature. In this way Doctor Shepard preached, and Elder Thomas Baldwin of Boston. Doctor Samuel Stillman, of Boston, and others, held to the limitation doctrine.

One thing which took place at brother Furber's, served to confirm me in preaching the gospel to every creature. One Saturday as I was returning to Lee, from a preaching tour in the towns around, I concluded on the morrow to preach upon Gen. xxviii. 12, "*And he dreamed, and, behold, a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and, behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it.*" After returning home, being wearied with my journey, I lay down in the afternoon and slept. In my sleep, I dreamed that an angel came and asked me if I meant to preach upon Jacob's ladder the next day. I said, yes. Well, said he, what do you mean to tell the people that ladder is? I said Christ, and to prove it, shall quote them John i. 51, "*Hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the son of man.*" That is right, said he. What more? I shall tell them the length of the ladder, which is so long as to reach from earth to heaven, which describes Christ the Mediator among men, and at the same time with his father. That is right added the angel. He then said, I will ask you one question more. How wide do you think that ladder is? My reply in the dream was: I do not know. It is what never before entered my mind; tell me the

width. He answered, it is as wide as the world. When he had said this, I dreamed that he quoted the following places of scripture to prove what he said : John iii. 16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." Luke ii. 30, 31, "For mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared before the face of all people." Mark xvi 15, "And he said unto them, go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

That part concerning the width of the ladder was new to me, and meditating on it, and the scriptures which the angel mentioned, I concluded that my dream about a dream was true. The next day, in the pulpit, I told the people of Jacob's dream and my own, and was happy in having an whole Saviour to preach to every creature.

That winter a young man by the name of Thomas Nichols, from Harvard, Mass. came into that part of the country, and preached in Epping, Brentwood, Kingston and South-Hampton. He was an humble, faithful, zealous young man ; and much engaged for the good of the children of men. He did not continue long, as he was of a slender constitution, and his zeal went beyond his strength. In about two years he died of a consumption, at the widow Brown's house in East-Kingston, N. H. He was composed and happy in his sickness, and died in peace, having



with joy finished his short course of preaching Christ to the sons of men.

His death brought a great solemnity on my mind, and led me to feel the importance of being also ready.

I do not now recollect where Joshua Smith was through the winter, but think he went to the State of New-York. In the spring of 1792, he returned, and we travelled together the chief part of the summer following.

In the latter part of April, there was a great revival of religion in Southampton, and many of the young and old were converted to God and wished to be baptised. As I was not ordained, Doctor Shepard appointed a day for me to preach on the occasion, and for him to baptise. A great company collected; and the meeting was held in Col. Benjamin Clough's barn. My text was this, *Ezek. lxiii. 10, 11, 'Thou son of man, shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities, and let them measure the pattern. And if they be ashamed of all they have done, shew them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the laws thereof, and write it in their sight, that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof and do them.'* My manner of speaking upon the text was this: 1. To describe the house, which I considered the church of

God. 2. The pattern, which I considered the order laid down in the new-testament. 3. The coming in, which was by baptising persons giving an evidence of being born again. 4. The goings out, which was turning a person out for not walking in newness of life. 5. The ordinances of the house, which were considered to be baptism and the Lord's supper. The form of one was burying in water; the form of the other, breaking bread, and giving wine to such as were in fellowship with the church. 6. The design of all this, which was that they may observe and do them.

My propositions were in general correct; yet I do not now think that any such things were meant in the text, though many of these things are contained in the new-testament. The house spoken of in the text, is one to be built in Jerusalem when Christ reigns on the earth one thousand years. And whoever reads and understands all said of the house by the prophet, will see that it does not mean the house of God mentioned in the new-testament. This was the best I knew then, and though the text was not explained right, yet the propositions were in general true.

The increasing call for Elders to baptise, led Doctor Shepard, and the church at Brentwood to propose to me to be ordained. This looked too great for me, as I did not think myself far enough advanced in knowledge and experience, to be in any measure qualified to take such an important advance in public

life. For some time I thought not to comply with the request on any account whatever; but at last consented to be ordained an evangelist, to travel and preach, without being confined to any particular place. This the brethren were willing for; but insisted on my remaining in that part of the country. It is often a matter of wonder to me that any young man should crowd himself forward in this particular; as there can be no greater evidence of his being unfit for the office. Whoever reads Paul's description of the qualifications of an Elder or Bishop, in his first epistle to Timothy, instead of crowding himself forward, will shrink back, and tremble, in view of the greatness and importance of the work. To watch for men's souls, as they that must give an account to God; to be a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death; to be in danger of having men's blood required of us; to be an example to the believer, in word, conversation, in doctrine, in purity, in charity, in spirit, and in all things shewing ourselves patterns of good works. All these things considered, will lead a person with seriousness to say, "Who is sufficient for these things?" All this at that time, lay with great weight on my mind; so they ought ever to remain. Should this book ever fall into the hands of young preachers; read this paragraph with attention, and consider what Paul has said upon the subject, and "the Lord give thee understanding in all things."



As the Newhampshire association was to be holden at Deerfield, the second Wednesday in June, 1792, the church thought best for me to be ordained at that time, if Elders Baldwin and Smith attended; otherwise to delay it to a future day, and send for them and others to attend. They did not attend, and it was put off. My enemies, and the enemies of truth, took occasion from this to raise some evil reports, which were short lived, and soon vanished away.

In the month of May I went to Vermont to visit my parents, and to invite Elder John Peak, who then lived in Windsor, Vt. to visit the eastern part of Newhampshire; hoping he would remove his family there, and be a fellow laborer with me and others in that region. My invitation he accepted, and came with me to the association in Deerfield. He preached the first sermon, from, 1 John i. 3, "*That ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his son Jesus Christ.*" At this time he was a warm, lively, experimental preacher. Calvinism had not then cooled his first love, as it did afterward. His preaching was new to the preachers and people; he enjoyed the spirit, power, and assurance of the subject; and his speech dropped upon them; and they waited for it as for the rain. Many said, "never did we hear a man speak like this man." He tarried some time in that region; and being highly esteemed for his work's sake; the church at



Deerfield invited him to make Deerfield the place of his abode. This invitation he accepted, and the next winter brought his family there. From Deerfield he went to Newtown, N. H. from there to Waburn, Mass. from there back to Newtown; from there to Barnstable on Cape Cod; from there to Newburyport, where he now lives, preaching *calvinism*, in all its parts, as I am frequently told.

In the month of July, 1792, Doctor Shepard, and the Brentwood church appointed for me to be ordained the third Wednesday in August; and wrote letters to the baptist churches in Northwood, Madbury, Haverhill, and the two baptist churches in Boston, requesting them to send their Elders, and chosen brethren to assist in ordaining their brother Elias Smith. As they wished the Elders and churches to know who they were to ordain, it was agreed for me to carry the letters to Boston, and Haverhill. I came in sight of Boston for the first time towards night, on the day of the commencement in Cambridge. When in Charlestown, near the bridge, I saw a constant stream of carriages, passing, and repassing, from Cambridge. It looked to me like confusion, and thinking all Boston must be in an uproar, having never before been in so large a place, nor seen how people conducted where they made ministers; I thought it unsafe to go in that night; and knowing Elder Thomas Green lived not far from Charlestown, concluded to put up with him

that night. After riding several miles, I came to his house, but was quite disappointed in the man; for he appeared very different from what he did in Brentwood, when he described Zion's King on a colt the foal of an ass.

His head was powdered, and the commencement took up his attention. He partly asked me to stop till morning, and necessity led me to accept all the invitation he gave me. I felt very uneasy that night, and wished for morning, that I might find a country preacher, in finding my brother Thomas Baldwin, whom I loved above all men on earth. About ten o'clock in the morning I passed over Charlestown bridge, and soon entered the borders of Boston, which then was in my view a great and important affair. I soon found brother Baldwin's house, and at the door enquired for him. He came to the door in his morning gown, and with a smiling countenance gave me his hand, calling me brother, and invited me into his house, bidding me welcome there. He was very different from Mr. Green. He put up my horse, said he was heartily glad to see me, hoped I would feel at home, &c. He soon proposed for me to preach at his meeting-house that evening, and the people were notified.

Hearing much of Doctor Samuel Stillman, on account of his great knowledge, eloquence &c. I had a great desire to see him; hear him talk, pray and preach. In the afternoon he came in. His appearance struck me with awe. He was a small man, but he looked

large to me. He was dressed in black, wore a large white wig, and three cornered hat. He looked as neat as is easy to be in a dirty world. He was very free in conversation, and among many other things, he related a circumstance which occurred in his meeting-house when he first came to Boston. He said he was preaching one afternoon upon *grace*, and in the midst of his discourse a man in the gallery rose up, threw out his arms, and cried aloud, "Free grace! free grace!" and sat down again. After meeting, he said, the man came to him to apologise for his conduct, saying, "the glory of grace shone so bright in his soul, that he could not refrain from crying out as he did." The Doctor, thought it a very extraordinary circumstance, that a common christian should feel so much as to be led to speak in a meeting-house; though David had said, "In his temple every one speaketh of his goodness," and Isaiah said, "Cry out and shout thou inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One in the midst of thee." After a short conversation, he left us saying, he should attend the evening meeting.

Through the whole afternoon my mind was greatly agitated on account of agreeing to preach in Boston, as I then thought, through ignorance, that Boston folks knew more than country people. In the evening the Doctor came, and we all went to meeting together. As soon as I entered the door, the chandelier took my attention, and on ascending the



pulpit stairs, the damask curtains, cushioning and silver candlesticks, set me to gazing, as these were all new things to me, such as I had never before seen. Brother Baldwin told me in the afternoon, that I had plain people to preach to, and many young converts, who delighted in plain preaching; he also told me some country preachers were apt to speak too long. All this did not make me free, for I felt as though my whole body and mind was in a state of close confinement. After singing and praying, I read the following for my text, Psalm, cxix. 116, "*And let me not be ashamed of my hope ;*" and attended to the following particulars. 1. The christian's hope. 2. The various ways in which they were often ashamed of their hope. 3. The importance of this prayer of David, "Let me not be ashamed of my hope." I spake about forty five minutes, and closed.

After setting down, I whispered to brother Baldwin to ask Doctor Stillman to pray. He rose up in the pulpit, and the first words he spake were, these; "O Lord, we are ashamed before thee, when we consider how often before men we have been ashamed of our hope!" He poured forth his words with the greatest ease, and in that short sentence comprehended all I had said in forty five minutes.

A meeting was appointed for me the next evening at Doctor Stillman's meeting-house. The day before that meeting I spent chiefly in viewing the different parts of the town,



in company with Mr. Baldwin, who shewed me many things which were a great curiosity to one brought up in the wilderness of Vermont. In the evening a large congregation gathered to hear the young stranger. I spake upon these words. Col. iii. 11, "*But Christ is all;*" and attended to two particulars. 1. Described Christ. 2. Shewed how he was all to believers. I spake upon these two particulars thirty minutes. Several of the young people came into Mr. Baldwin's house after meeting, and complained that the sermon was too short. Doctor Stillman on hearing what they said, replied, "that was a good fault in young preachers, and that it was better to leave people longing than loathing; and that people ought always to be left with a good appetite."

Having obtained Mr. Baldwin's promise to attend the ordination, I returned, and on the way, preached at Elder Smith's meeting-house in Haverhill, had but little freedom there, as I thought there was more form than spirit.

As my place of residence was in Lee, the people requested me to be ordained there. This was agreed on, and general notice given. At the time appointed, (the third Wednesday in August, 1792,) a very great company of people met on the occasion. Mr. Baldwin thought there were about three thousand people. At ten o'clock in the forenoon, the Elders and brethren met in deacon Martin's house, and formed themselves into what they

called an ecclesiastical council. Elder Thomas Baldwin was chosen moderator, and Elder William Hooper, I think, was chosen clerk. All this being done, they proceeded according to the order of the baptist denomination. There was nothing said about the order of the new-testament ; it is not likely that any one in the council thought of that, and I am certain it never entered my mind ; because it was a fixed point with me that the baptists order was in all things according to the scriptures of truth. The first thing in order, after choosing the moderater and clerk, was, for me to give the reason of my hope in Christ. Next my call to preach the gospel.

After this I was examined closely concerning the doctrine believed. A report had gotten into circulation that I denied the imputation of Christ's righteousness, as the matter of a sinner's justification ; this Elder H. Smith, of Haverhill had heard of, and though he did not attend, yet he was particular to tell Capt. Dow, who was sent by that church, not to assist in my being ordained, if the imputation of Christ's righteousness was denied. This was brought before the council, and talked much upon. I told the council, that Christ himself was the righteousness, in which a person was accepted in the sight of God, and that Paul held the same, and quoted them Rom. x. 4, " For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth." 1 Cor. i. 30, " But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us, wisdom and righteousness."

After much talk, Elder Baldwin told the council, if his brother held that Christ was the righteousness, that was enough, for said he, Christ is all, and the prophet Jeremiah said : " His name shall be *called* the Lord our righteousness." Jer. xxiii. 6. This ended the matter, and the council agreed that they had an evidence of my being converted to God, called to preach the gospel, and sound in the faith. This being done, the next thing in order was, to assign to each one the part he was to take in the ordination. It was agreed that brother Baldwin should preach the sermon, and make the ordaining prayer ; Doctor Shepard give the charge, and brother Baldwin give the right hand of fellowship.

All this being done, at two o'clock, we went to the place appointed to perform what was agreed on by the council. As but a small part of the people could get into the meeting-house ; a stage was built on the plain before the meeting-house in Lee, large enough to hold the ministers. It being a fair day, the people gathered round the stage to hear. Brother Baldwin preached from, 2 Tim. iv. 5, "*But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.*" He described an evangelist, as to his call and qualifications ; his work, and the afflictions he must endure in making full proof of his ministry. He delivered a good, scriptural, spiritual discourse ; suitable to the occasion, and took off the unconverted ministers severely.



In speaking upon the necessity of regeneration, in order to preach the gospel, he said that some, to prove that unconverted ministers might preach the gospel, brought up Balaam and Judas for examples. "I should be ashamed, said he, to be in so bad a cause, as to need Balaam and Judas to bear me out in my conduct. It is true, added he, that Balaam prophesied of Christ, but he loved the wages of unrighteousness, and was a cloud without water, to whom is reserved the mist of blackness, and darkness forever. As for Judas, said he, though he obtained part of the ministry, yet in a short time he was hung by the neck, with a bag of money under his arm. Away with such preachers as these, and such as plead their examples to prove that unconverted men may preach the gospel of the grace of God!" Such preaching at that day made rending work, among the friends of unconverted ministers. The discourse in general was calculated to do good. After sermon, the other parts were attended to, according to the best light the ministers had at that day. The people were satisfied, and departed in peace.

After the ordination was over, brother Baldwin conversed with me respecting what was said in the council about righteousness, and stated to me that he held as I did about righteousness, and had for many years.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

When the ordination was over, brother Baldwin and the brother that came with him from Boston, Thomas Badger, Doctor Shephard, and several others went to brother Furber's house, which was my home. After supper, Doctor Shephard, who was naturally a cheerful man, told a story respecting an Indian, which he wished me ever to remember, lest I should be too much lifted up on account of the notice taken of me by the Elders, brethren and others. He said that a certain Indian having a river to cross in his canoe, thought to save the trouble of paddling across the river, by sticking up a bush in the bow of his boat. When about two thirds across the river, the wind blew so hard that it upset his canoe, and was obliged to swim to reach the shore, while his boat floated down the stream. Several people on the shore saw the difficulty he was in, and as soon as he was upon the land, they asked him, what was the cause of his swimming, instead of coming in his canoe. "O, said he, me carry too much bush!" "Now, said the Doctor, you are a young man, and just set out in the world; you will do well enough, if you do not carry too much bush." This caution I have ever remembered, and had this been attended to by me and many others, we should have been much more useful in the world, and saved ourselves and others much trouble.

I here leave a word to young preachers, and *old* ones in particular, which is, "*that they do not carry too much bush.*" There is some danger of young men ; more in the *old*. In the course of twenty-five years, I have seen that more old preachers fall than young, or carry too much bush, and upset. This is true among the *clergy*, and those who profess to preach experimentally. It is not common to see a young man fall by *drunkenness, adultery, extortion, &c.* but how many *old men* do we see upset in this way. One thing has for many years been a matter of lamentation to me ; that is, to see a man arrive with an unspotted character, to an age, when his knowledge, experience, labor, example, and time of life might render him more useful than he had ever been ; and at that time, do that which not only proved him the greatest fool, but which destroyed all his usefulness ; grieved the good, gave the adversary occasion to speak reproachfully, and sunk himself into disgrace and contempt ! Who are the men, generally speaking, among the settled *clergy*, and others, that are turned out for drinking, adultery, and other wickedness ? They are generally men past the meridian of life. Who are the self willed and soon angry ? Not young men generally. Who are the ministers that are fond of high sounding, anti-christian titles, and gay attire ? They are generally men old enough to set a better example. Who are the men that can never have enough ? Who threaten to leave the town,

or church, if they do not give them more money? This is not commonly done by young men. Old ministers sue the town for a few hundred dollars, after they have been supported, till old age has rendered them useless, and a burden grievous to be borne. Old men are often more confident in their own opinion, than seven men that can render a reason. These things are facts, that can be supported by the scriptures, and what takes place in our day.

When Saul was young, and fit to rule, he hid himself among the stuff; but when he was old, and unfit to rule, by forsaking the Lord; then he sought to slay David, because the daughters of Israel ascribed ten times the honor to him, that they did to Saul. When David was young, he felt his dependance, and trusted in the Lord; but when he was old, rich, and in authority, he committed crimes which caused him ever after to go with broken bones. When Solomon was young, he prayed for wisdom, and had it to that degree, that the kings of the earth sought after him, on account of it. When he was old, then he forsook God, and became such a fool, that he bowed his knees to an idol to please his wives, and gratify a foolish heart. When Cyrus was young, he was temperate in food and drink, and plain in his dress; but when he was old, and had taken Babylon; he lived in all the grandeur of the kings of the east. Young men are commonly liberal, and it is the most common thing to see old men covetous. Young

men who have many years before them, are but little concerned about a living. Old men, who cannot live long, are concerned about a living, and call for more salary. The cause of all these things is, they carry too much bush. I leave the story, and the remarks on it to the reader, and pursue my history.

In East-Kingston, and South-Hampton, there had been many converted to God in the course of this summer; who waited for me to baptise them. The day after being ordained, I rode in company with Mr. Baldwin to Kingston plain; there we parted. He went on to Haverhill that day, and I to my appointment in East-Kingston.

After preaching, I baptised three. The name of the first baptised, was Reuben Dow; the second was Henry Gale. They both now live near the place where they were baptised, and have both in a good degree, maintained their profession to this day, with many others who were baptised at that time, or soon after.

Either this year, in September, 1792, or the September before, the Warren association of baptists, was holden at New-Bowley, Ms. about ten miles from Newburyport. In this association, which I attended, Elder Hezekiah Smith, of Haverhill, brought forward a kind of bill, or proposal, which I believe was the first of the kind, in which was stated the propriety of incorporating baptist churches and societies, in order to oblige people to pay what they had agreed to give their ministers,



if they refused to do it voluntarily. He was a rich man ; had been in the habit of taking notes of such as owed him for preaching, and did not pay at the end of the year, as I understood. Since that time I have seen one of the notes a member of the society gave him for preaching. This proposal met with a spirited opposition from the ministers and other members. He stated that it was no hurt to have law enough to make people fulfil their contracts. After much dispute upon the subject, old Elder Isaac Backus, from Middleborough, Mass. who was the oldest in the association, rose, and began an account of what had happened to him and others, in consequence of such power in other denominations, and before he had done, the proposal appeared so *black* and anti-christian, that it was thrown out for that year. It was however brought up afterwards, and the society at Haverhill was incorporated, and from this it spread, till cattle and horses were taken by force to pay baptist ministers for preaching.

In the course of this summer, several in Salisbury, N. H. where the new baptist meeting-house was built, wished to be baptised, and join the baptist church in Brentwood. Doctor Shepard went to baptise them, and I attended with him. After we met to hear the reason of their hope in Christ, Mr Thomas Worcester, the congregational minister of the town, sent a man, directing him to tell Doctor Shepard, that if he baptised any, he wished him to go out of town to do it ; as he was a-

fraid it would hinder the reformation there, to baptise in the town. The Doctor, who was a man of good sense, and ready thought, after hearing the message, said, "you tell parson Worcester, that I am an older man than he, and have seen more of the world; and that I never knew an instance in baptising according to the scriptures, that the work of God was hindered by it, unless it was done by the minister of the town." The messenger appeared thunder-struck, and retired in silence, leaving the Doctor to obey his masters orders undisturbed.

The September after being ordained, I attended the Woodstock association. Doctor Shepard attended among the many. The evening of our arrival in the town, a meeting was appointed for Elder David Irish, from Stillwater. N. Y. He read for his text the following: "*The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.*" He proposed, 1. To describe the diseases peculiar to men. 2. The physician. 3. The importance of applying to him. He spake a few minutes upon the first particular, under some embarrassments; and finally said, Brother Smith, I wish you would speak upon the subject, for I cannot. Thus speaking, he sat down. This was the first time of my seeing a minister on shore high and dry. All pitied, but none could relieve him. I spake upon his propositions as well as my abilities would allow. Others spake afterwards, and the meeting closed.

The first day of the association, a man from Middleborough, Vt. by the name of Sylvanus Haynes, preached from Acts xvii. 30, "*But now commandeth all men every where to repent.*" He spake upon two particulars. 1. The command, repent. 2. The reason of this command. In speaking upon the reason why God commanded all men every where to repent, he stated the following particulars as the reason. 1. Because our revolt from God was entirely groundless. 2. Because the impenitent were unhappy, and unsafe. 3. Because God had provided a way by which the penitent might be pardoned, and brought into favor with God. 4. Because none but the penitent could enjoy God, here or hereafter. 5. Because God had appointed a day to judge the impenitent by Jesus Christ, and all who remained impenitent would then perish. His discourse was solemn, and his arguments weighty. One young man, after hearing the sermon, said, "I am very certain that if I am lost forever, it will be my own fault." The second day, Doctor Shepard preached the greatest and best sermon, I ever heard him deliver. His text was this: 1 Tim. iv. 8, "*But godliness is profitable unto all things; having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*" He first described godliness. Second, shewed wherein it was profitable, as it respected young and old, parents and children, rich and poor, magistrates and subjects, the healthy and the dying, and particularly, its

profitableness, in having connected with it, the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come. All bore him witness, and marvelled at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth. This was a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. The meeting closed, leaving a lasting impression on the minds of many.

Soon after the association I returned to Lee, and preached there, and among the brethren in the regions around, and frequently baptised such as gave an evidence of being believers in heart.

This season, I visited Northwood several times ; a town about eight miles north of Lee. There were glorious reformations that year in different parts of the town, and many were converted to God. At one meeting nine were baptised by Elder Pilsbury. One circumstance at the water I remember, which is worthy of being recorded here. As the Elder led one man to the edge of the water, by the name of Knowles, he stopped and said to the Elder, "wait a minute." He then raised up his hands and said, with a loud voice : "O Lord, thou hast made me, thou hast preserved me, and redeemed me. I now deliver myself to thee, to be thine forever ; lead me, preserve me through this vain world, and keep me safe unto thy heavenly kingdom, and thy great name shall have all the praise forever. Amen and Amen." This short, solemn, and comprehensive prayer, brought solemnity on the minds of many who stood



around, and every word was fixed in my memory. After this, the Elder led him into the water, and baptised him after the example of the King of saints.

Not far from this time, I went to Candia, and preached at Joseph Palmer's house. Mr. Remington, whom I met at brother H. Burgin's, attended the meeting. Previous to this meeting, I had heard that he was much opposed to the reformation, and said, that what some called the work of God, he called the work of the devil. In my prayer, I mentioned him, as one that appeared to be opposed to this work. After the meeting was done, he told the people, the preacher had called him an opposer to the work of God. I denied his statement. He then appealed to brother H. Burgin, who was present. He said he believed it was not so. I then told him that my statement was, that he appeared to be opposed to this work, and that I heard he called it the work of the devil, and that he was opposed to it, whether it was God's work or the devil's. Here he paused awhile, and then said, with a stern voice, and hard look: "Mr. Smith, you have no business here in my parish." My reply was; "Sir I am not in your parish, neither have I been in it to day;" and further added, "is not this man a baptist that lives here?" He answered, "I suppose he is, if he is any thing." "Does he own this house and land?" He said, "yes." "Then I am not in your parish." "Well," said he, "you have told one falshood, you

said you had not been in my parish to day ; and you could not get here without coming through my parish." My reply was, "That is a mistake sir, I came in the road, and that does not belong to you, but to the public." Here the controversy ended, and by this time I concluded the devil had caught away some of the word sown that day. Here we parted, and do not remember that we ever had any conversation together afterwards. I heard that he said afterwards, that Doctor Shepard, Elias Smith and the *devil*, were calculated to do more hurt, than any other *three beings* he was acquainted with.

In the month of November, the same year, the people in Salisbury sent a man to Lee, requesting me to come there to preach and baptise. The meeting was appointed on Saturday at eleven o'clock. On account of the rain on Friday, I could get no farther than Allenstown that day. Towards day on Saturday morning, I set out for Salisbury, which was about thirty miles ; rode to Concord, (ten miles,) by sunrise, and arrived in Salisbury about ten o'clock. Many people had gathered to hear and see. Nine came forward in the meeting-house, and gave the reason of their hope in Christ, and were baptised in a small stream near the meeting house, at a place on Jonathan Fifield's land, which the people had prepared for that purpose. The next day I spake to a crowded, and attentive assembly. Many in the assembly mourned their undone situation, and

others rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. An happy union took place at that time, which continued for several years, and with many of them it continues to this day. Having fulfilled my appointments in Salisbury, I returned to Lee.

## CHAPTER XXV.

About this time, there arose a considerable stir about what some called *election*, *predestination*, *calvinism*, and *hopkinsianism*. Not far from this time, Mr. Samuel Hopkins' famous book came out, called Hopkins' body of divinity. This made no small stir. This arrested the attention of the calvinistic baptists, with many others. Joshua Smith had said much upon Election, though he preached a free gospel. Elder Benjamin Randall, a free-will baptist preacher, began to be known, and by the other baptists was considered a very erroneous man. Elder William Hooper, of Madbury, was considered an orthodox preacher. Dr. Shepard, was by many, thought a kind of mongrel preacher ; neither a calvinist nor free-will preacher. but between them both. One man told him he rode on the tongue of the cart. He said, in my hearing, it was so, and that being there, the oxen could not kick him, nor the wheel run over him. I thought afterwards that he fared hard, for the oxen kicked him off, and the wheel ran over him. Amidst all that was

said, it seemed duty for me to be decided about the matter, as it was by many considered a subject of vast importance.

In the month of December, 1792, having an appointment at Deerfield, I concluded to visit Dr. Shepard on the way, and converse with him upon the subject. At his house we conversed freely upon election. He was very careful what he said; but the amount of all I could get from him was this: "*God gives that to some which he owes to none.*" This only perplexed my mind. On Saturday afternoon, on my way alone, my thoughts ran thus upon the subject, without the bible, or attending to what is said there: "If God has determined any thing, he has determined every thing; and if he has foreordained that a certain part shall be saved, he has designed the remainder for something; this must be for damnation; and they must be lost as certainly, as the others must be saved; and he who is the cause of the salvation of some, is the cause of the damnation of the others. This was my *vain philosophy* at that time. This I concluded was true, according to my manner of reasoning.

Upon this plan, a difficulty arose in my mind which was this: "If all things are thus fixed, why are all men commanded to repent and believe the gospel? And why is salvation promised to them that believe, and damnation determined to them that disbelieve? My philosophy answered these questions in a short time, in the following manner:



“Though God has determined that a certain part *shall* be saved; yet he has determined they shall be saved through faith in Christ; and though God has determined some shall be damned, yet he is determined they shall be damned for unbelief. Some shall believe, all might believe, though they will not. In this way I can preach the gospel to every creature, and as I do not know who the elect are, must do my duty in preaching to all, and the Lord knows how to select his own from among the non-elect.” Here my mind was for several years, until the infection I took that afternoon, broke out *universalism*, about ten years after, and was thoroughly cured by applying the “ROOT OF JESSEE,” to the wound that it caused.

Having the system so fixed in my mind, as to be able to preach to all, I always kept it for *ballast*, and never considered it a part of my *cargo*. Some doubted whether I had any of it on board, but as they descended low, they always found some of it. By keeping my fatalism so, I ever preached a free gospel to all, and this was frequently blest to many, while my calvinism for ballast preserved my reputation among the calvinists, who considered me sound in their faith. This terrible doctrine of men, I held about ten years, and then signed an acquittance forever, to the great grief of its friends and admirers.

On the seventh of January, 1793, I was married to MARY BURLEIGH, fifth daughter of Josiah Burleigh of Newmarket, county of

Rockingham, state of Newhampshire. I was then twenty three years, six months, and twenty one days old. My wife was born, May twenty-fourth, 1773. The day we were married, she was nineteen years, seven months, and thirteen days old. We were married by Doctor Samuel Shepard, a baptist preacher, of Brentwood, N. H. We lived in a married state, twenty one years, one month, and twenty days. February 27, 1814, she died of the typhus fever in Philadelphia. We lived together but a small part of twenty-one years ; as my work was to travel and preach, I was gone from home a considerable part of that time. We lived in harmony through the whole time, and she was a faithful friend to me, the children, my interest, reputation, and the cause of religion, and endured through many scenes of trouble which we were called to experience in the course of twenty-one years. When we were married, all the property I owned, was an horse, saddle and bridle, sleigh, and my clothes.

Being but little acquainted with life, I was ignorant of the difficulties people are called to encounter, and having been always provided for, had no doubt, but "the Lord would provide" in time to come. This has been proved true to the present time. I then enjoyed a kind of independence from men, not because of so much, but because I could live upon so little.

In the month of January, several people in Effingham, N. H. who had been baptised by

Elder Taylor of that town, sent to Brentwood, requesting the baptist church there, to send an Elder and brethren to constitute them a branch of the Brentwood church; that being a method adopted by Doctor Shepard, where there were small companies of brethren in a distant town. With me were chosen, brethren, Broadstreet Gilman, of Newmarket, and Deacon Moses Clark, of Stratham. We arrived at Effingham, about the first of February. The Elder and brethren there were considered by us a branch of the Brentwood church, in fellowship with the whole body. After several preaching meetings, we returned back to our places of abode.

In the course of this winter, Joshua Smith went to Bow, a town on Merrimack river, and preached some time. A considerable number were converted to God, and baptised according to the new-testament. John Bryant Esq. first invited him there. A blessing rested on him, and his family. Four of his daughters were the happy sharers in the reformation. One is dead, the others for ought I know, continue in obedience to the gospel to this day. The latter part of February, I visited them, and found an happy number united in love; walking in the ordinances of the Lord blameless. From Bow I went to Salisbury by request, tarried and preached with them certain days. The church and society pressed me hard to make my home with them, as I expected to make some town the place of my permanent residence in the spring.



Giving them some encouragement, I returned to Newmarket in March, promising to give them a final answer in April. As to outward things there was something to engage my attention there. They had a new meeting-house completely finished. The society was large, rich, and liberal; and proposed to give me two hundred dollars per year; find me an house and wood. There was a prospect of doing good in that town and in many towns around who wished to hear baptist preachers. The chief objection was, that it was too far back in the country, as my choice was to live near the sea; and another thing of considerable weight, which was, that of leaving so many good brethren in the eastern part of the state. After my return, I stated to the brethren the request of the people in Salisbury. They were universally against my making an home in that town, and said so much against it, that my determination was not to go, if it was possible to get off fairly. When I visited them in April, they were so determined on my coming, that there was no way to get clear, and agreed to go upon this condition: to be at liberty to return in six months, if I did not choose to abide with them any longer.

Just before that time, the people in Warner, about eight miles from Salisbury, agreed to build a meeting-house; and calculated for me to preach there one third of the time, and at Salisbury the other two thirds. This the people in both towns were agreed in; and to this I consented, and returned to give a decid-



ed answer to the brethren in Lee, and the other towns.

When they heard what was determined, they were greatly grieved, and my coming at that time caused general sorrow to myself and my brethren. The last of April, 1793, I preached my farewell sermon, at Broadstreet Gilman's house ; the place where I attended the first meeting two years before. My text was this : 1 Pet. v. 10, "*But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Jesus Christ, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.*" We parted in tears, hoping for one meeting, no more to part.

I journeyed to Salisbury, and met the people at the day appointed. It was not long before my labors were blest, in the conversion of many to God. In the last of May, I returned to Newmarket with a friend from Salisbury who accompanied me. My wife went with us to Salisbury, and we lived in Capt. Benjamin Pettingill's family six weeks, before our furniture came on. My wife was well provided with furniture by her father, who was both able and willing to help her.

On Saturday evening, the furniture was brought at the expence of the people in Salisbury. Monday, we put our furniture in its place, and in the afternoon left our boarding-house. I had not made any provision for food to live upon ; depending on the people to supply us ; of course, we had no provision in the house to live on. Towards night,

Reuben True, who was at that time an hearty friend to us, brought a large dry codfish, as a present. Mrs. Fifield, wife of Jonathan Fifield, brought us half of a loaf of flour bread, and about one pound of butter. The committee of the society took up at Eliphalet William's store, some crockery, glass-ware, sugar, tea and coffee, to the amount of sixteen dollars. With all these things we were well provided with food, for more than one day; this was enough for that time, and we were both contented with our situation. This was indeed a small beginning, but large enough for our wants.

At that time, the great things of the kingdom of God; the glory of Christ; the salvation of sinners; and my duty to the saints, took up my attention so that there was little or no room left, to desire much of this world; or to feel distressed about what we should eat, drink, or wherewithal we should be clothed. Through that summer, the work of the Lord went on gloriously in Salisbury, Boscawen, Warner, Andover and New-Chester.; so that my time was almost wholly taken up in preaching and baptizing in these towns. In the assembly that attended at Salisbury, from Boscawen and Andover, were many who gave an evidence of being born of the spirit. In the course of one year, over one hundred were converted and baptised as members of that church. Our meetings were remarkably free, and the converts often spake, prayed and sung in the meeting-house; while all were at-

tentive to hear them. The attention was so great, that I felt contented to abide with them; and when my engagement for six months was out, I agreed to continue with them six months longer; determining after that time to return to the eastern part of the state again.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

In the course of the summer, 1793, some of Mr. Worcester's church left him; were baptised, and became members of the baptist church. This greatly disturbed him, and other leaders in the congregational church. He wrote me one or two severe letters, but I paid no attention to them. He then wrote, requesting me to appoint a day for him to visit me, and converse upon the things he had stated in his letter, if I would not write. I told the bearer, that he might find me at home the next Monday afternoon.

Previously to this, he had written a letter to a man in Salem, Mass. by the name of Norris; this letter was so against me, that Mr. Norris shewed it to some of my friends in Danvers. They shewed it to Elder Thomas Green, who then lived at Danvers Mills. He from regard to me, copied the letter and sent it in another by the hand of a brother, Benjamin Clough, who lived near me. Elder Green in his letter stated, that Mr. Worcester's letter made an unfavorable impression on the minds of many; and that in propor-



tion as Mr. Worcester was considered a good divine, I was considered a bad one. I received Elder Green's letter, and a copy of Mr. Worcester's, the Saturday evening before he had appointed to meet me on Monday.

Having received this, I considered myself well prepared to meet him. On the first day of the week, I told some of the leading members of the church of the appointed meeting; the letter received, &c. and desired them to attend on Monday without fail. This they agreed to do, as they considered it of importance to have witnesses of what would be said on both sides.

At 2 o'clock, Mr. Worcester came, attended by some of his chief men. My brethren were particular to attend by the time. After some general observations, I observed to him, that we were all ready to attend to the things stated in his letters to me. He stated that the subjects contained in his letters to me were things he wished to converse upon. He had stated in one letter several points of doctrine, which he supposed I held, which he considered erroneous; and also that I was making bad use of my abilities. In the close of his letter he said, "I consider you a man of abilities; but good abilities badly used, are extremely injurious to the cause of religion." In the presence of six witnesses, we took up every particular in his letters; and there was but one thing that we differed upon; that was baptism. When we had gone through, I asked him what grounds he had to bring



such charges against me, when he had no proof to support his charges? He replied, that he had been told so by some who heard me, whom he supposed were judges of what they heard. My advice to him was, that in future he should be careful how he judged and condemned others without knowing for himself that they were guilty. He said he thought he should be more careful in future. The business respecting his letter to me being settled, I thought it time to introduce the other. This was introduced in the following manner. "Mr. Worcester, have you any personal difficulty with me?" "Have you ever heard of my speaking unfavorably of you by misrepresenting you, or endeavoring to injure your character or usefulness?" He answered, no. I then asked, "Have you said or done any thing calculated to injure my character or usefulness?" He said, "not any where near." "Have you at a distance?" He replied, "I am not obliged to tell you if I have." I then said, "You may as well own it, for I can prove you have." He then with an air of importance said, "Your bare say so will not prove it." "No, said I, but I have in my possession the copy of a letter, which I believe can be proved to be written by you; which is calculated to injure me." This saying appeared to strike a damp on him and his nobles. He and they remained silent for a while; when he spake he said, "I did not think you would ever get that letter; I shall reprove my friend for letting it be

known." My reply was, "You must do as you please respecting your friend ; but you ought to be careful what you write, as such things are apt to be published, and I have some friends as well as enemies." Having gone so far, I then took out the letter, and read it to his and my friends. I have not the letter by me, but part of it I remember, though it was done twenty two years ago. The following is I believe about as he wrote to his friend :

"The baptists continue to exert themselves in making proselytes in this town ; and not without some considerable success. They have lately drawn away a brother that has been in good standing with us for many years. I think the wisdom of God is manifest in this particular. In a time of so much prosperity we need something to humble us, least we should be too much lifted up. The baptist ministers who have preached among us of late, appear to be zealous of proselyting to their own sentiments and party ; a success of this kind, is all of which they can boast. There is one of that denomination, that preaches for the most part of the time in this town, by the name of *Elias Smith*. He boldly denies, that sinners are under any obligations to God ; but only to Christ, in the character of mediator. Immediately after baptising, he has publicly said, "Lord it is done as thou has commanded and yet there is room." Last week, when baptising the above named person, he publicly prayed, without an

if, that all his brethren, and all the brethren of this church might see, and practice as he had done. How long he will be suffered to go on in this way the Lord only knows. But offences must come, and how consolating is the thought, that every event is under the divine direction, and that the Lord reigns forever, even thy God O, Zion." Yours, &c.

Reading this letter had an humbling effect on him and his brethren, as we all thought; and he promised to write to his friend; and inform him that the statements he had made concerning me were incorrect. This was all I asked of him at that time. After taking some refreshment, they all withdrew. As he went out at the door, he requested me to let the matter remain in silence for that time. So it has remained until now. The above is according to the best of my recollection. After this we lived in peace, and I came very near being drawn into the vortex of *hopkintonianism*, but finally escaped.

In the latter part of the winter following, (1794.) I was about determined, when my year was out with them, to return to Newmarket or some town near that. The whole church and society were opposed to my leaving them; and at a society meeting in March, were unanimously agreed in my continuing with them, and they manifested a willingness to do what was needful for the support of me and my family. They further proposed to purchase a small convenient house, that stood near the meeting-house, and to make me a



present of it. This I was utterly opposed to ; as it would lay me under an additional obligation to continue with them. This objection they removed by telling me if I went away in six months, the house should be mine. For a long time I refused to take a deed of it. At last the committee told me if I would not take the deed, they would give it to my wife. I then consented ; but told them it was my fixed determination to go from that town.

In the spring of 1794, I moved into the house, and lived in it one or two years, and then exchanged it for a two storied house nearer the meeting-house. No one made objection to this, as the house was mine to keep, or dispose of at pleasure. September 18th, of the same year, my eldest child was born in the house they gave me. Near that time my mother came to visit us, and gave her the name, *Ursula*, out of respect to a daughter of Governor Griswold, of Lyme, in Connecticut, who had been an intimate acquaintance of hers, in the days of her youth. When she was about one month old, my youngest brother, Richard R. Smith, visited us, and on first seeing the child, composed the following lines :

“ We bid you welcome little stranger,  
To this world of sin and danger ;  
May you in years and grace increase,  
And dwell at last in perfect peace.”



## CHAPTER XXVII.

When my oldest child was ten days old, the 28th of September, 1794, having previously concluded on a journey to Lyme, Con. I sat out from Salisbury, and went first to Woodstock, as my father had agreed to go with me. I arrived there on Tuesday, 30th. Wednesday, Oct. 1, we went to Claremont, N. H. and held a meeting with Elder J. Peak, who was there on a visit, with his wife. Thursday, rode to Hinsdale. Friday, we went to South-Hadley. Saturday, to St. field, and put up with Elder Hastings', a baptist preacher, who received us in a very cool manner. With him we tarried till Sunday night. He had a new, small brick meeting-house, partly finished, and but a few people in it in the forenoon. He asked me to preach first; I complied with his request. In the intermission, the people heard that a stranger preached in the morning, and in the afternoon the house was quite full. Seeing so many people come, he asked me to preach in the afternoon. I spake to the people according to the best of my ability.

The assembly appeared very attentive, as though the word had some effect on them. After meeting, deacon Robbins asked me to appoint a meeting at his house, about two miles from the meeting-house. This I did, and the house was crouded in every part with candid, attentive hearers.

While with Elder Hastings, on Saturday evening, though he seemed cool at first, yet afterwards he grew more free, and conversed upon many things. He had just returned from the ordination of Mr. Whelpley, a baptist minister, in Sandersfield, Mass. This young man was educated at Providence college, as I heard; studied divinity with Dr. Stillman, of Boston, and was quite in clerical fashion. As he had a college education, and was something like the clergy in Connecticut, several of the presbyterian clergy attended. Elder Hastings stated to us that Elder John Leland was appointed to preach the ordination sermon. He said that when the people came together, the meeting-house would not hold them. The people then went to a grove, near the house; erected a stage that the people might hear. Mr. Leland had not spoken long, before it began to rain a little, so that several people went to the meeting-house for a shelter. As they were going, Elder Leland said to old Elder Thomas Morse, "What shall I do, father Morse?" He replied, "Wait a little while; the rain will soon be over, and the people will return." He sat a while; the cloud passed over, and the people returned. After they were all seated, ready to hear, Mr. Leland rose up, and after looking around, as though surprised, and wishing also to sting the clergy severely on account of their infant sprinkling, he said, "My friends, I am astonished to see baptists afraid of water! But when I come to think,

it is *sprinkling* ; and I do not wonder that you flee from it." This was a severe stroke upon the Connecticut clergy, and very mortifying to Mr. Whelpley. Mr. Leland having said this, proceeded in his sermon as he had proposed before the shower.

Elder Hastings, on Saturday evening, gave us another account of Mr. Leland's wit in Virginia. He stated, that in one place in Virginia, where Mr. Leland went to preach one cold day, the principal people were in the habit of going out before the meeting was done, if the minister spake much over three quarters of an hour. Some of the brethren told him they hoped he would not preach long, for if he did, there were some gentlemen that would leave the house. He said nothing ; but went to meeting. After speaking about forty-five minutes, he noticed that some grew uneasy, and acted as though they meant soon to go out. Observing this, he paused a moment, and then said, " My friends, it is cold, and I have now got about half through my discourse ; and I suppose those of you who have holes in the heels of your stockings will be obliged to leave the house before the meeting is done." This saying removed all the apparent uneasiness ; and no one dared to leave the house till the meeting closed.

Having heard Elder Hastings' anecdotes about Mr. Leland, preached twice in the meeting-house, and once in Deacon Robbins' house, he sat out with us on Monday morning for Hartford. We arrived there about



the middle of the day. Formed some new acquaintance; preached in the evening; put up with Deacon Beckwith, and on Tuesday morning set out for a place called Hartford five miles, about ten miles from the city; here I preached in the evening to a company of old brethren and others, that I had formed an acquaintance with when teaching a school among them the winter before I was twenty years old. They were heartily glad to see me, and rejoiced to see me engaged in the glorious work of preaching the gospel of Christ.

Wednesday, we rode to the upper part of Lyme, and put up with Captain Abner Lee, the man with whom my father served his apprenticeship. He was an old man, and an humble happy disciple of Jesus. He with his wife received us cheerfully. We attended a meeting there that evening.

The good old man had prepared his house for meetings, and had seats ready, and a moveable pulpit, which he could make convenient with a little trouble. After the people were gone home, and they were carrying out the seats, the old man told me of one thing about Mr. Leland, who had preached in his pulpit some time before. He stated that after the seats were placed, and the pulpit, he said to Mr. Leland, "I do not know as you can put up with our wooden pulpit." He made no reply, but began his meeting. After preaching a while, he had occasion to notice the preaching the people



had in old times ; and noticed the difference between that and the popular doctrines of the day in which he lived. “ In the days of the apostles, said he, they had *wooden pulpits* and *golden preaching*, but now they have *golden pulpits* and *wooden preaching*. Give me a wooden pulpit, and golden preaching, rather than golden pulpits and wooden preaching !” And let all the people say, Amen.

Captain Lee told us of another thing respecting Mr. Leland, that I here mention, that preachers may learn to avoid extremes in preaching. Mr. L. is, and has been considered a man of the most ready *wit* of any preacher in the country. The old pilgrim said that when preaching in Mr. Daniel Miner’s meeting-house, he undertook to describe the freeness of the gospel, though he was a calvinist, and to tell the people how welcome every class of men were to the gospel feast. He went into particulars. Said he the rich may come, the poor may come and be welcome. The king may come, the meanest subject may come. The blind, the deaf, the dumb, the halt, the lame may come. The thief, the liar, the drunkard, the extortioner, the blasphemer, if he repents, may come. The Jew, the Gentile, the European, the Greenlander, the African, the Indian may come. The meanest slave, the old and young may come to the gospel feast. Here he paused, as the minds of the people were wrought up to the highest pitch, he added,

"I had like to have said, you may come tag, rag, and bobtail and all." This for a moment took away all the solemnity of what he had said before, and some remembered only this part of the discourse. Such expressions are not commendable in any public speaker; as in this way their good is evil spoken of.

Capt. Lee's wife, who was a woman of fine sense, told us of another preacher who had spoken there, that made a great mistake in preaching, by reading his text wrong. His text was this, Zep. iii. 3, "*Her princes within her are roaring lions, her judges are evening wolves; they know not the bones till the morrow.*" He read it "*they know not the bones to the marrow.*" And so he preached upon his text. This may serve to lead preachers, at least to read their text right, before they undertake to give the meaning to others.

Having been favored with a short, pleasant and profitable visit with these aged pilgrims, on Thursday morning we sat out to attend a meeting at Elder Daniel Miner's meeting-house, about four miles south. This man was what then was called a separate congregationalist, and was the one that sprinkled me; and this was the meeting-house where it was done. Entering the house, the whole scene of being sprinkled came fresh into my mind. Mr. Miner received me heartily, and wished me to preach, though the meeting was appointed for him. They desired me to preach the next Sabbath day, and the meeting was appointed.

The next day, Elder Miner went with us several miles, to a kinsman of his by the name of Elias Miner. Here we dined, and after singing and prayer we parted. He returned home and we went on to see Elder Jason Lee, an old baptist preacher.

Previous to this, he had written, requesting me if possible, in his day, to visit the land of my nativity, and preach the gospel to the people. When we met him at his house, he resembled the old disciple with whom some of the apostles once were to lodge. He received my father and me with all that affection and friendship peculiar to a disciple and minister of Jesus. Here we tarried until Monday morning. On the first day of the week, many people gathered at the meeting-house.

After we went into the pulpit, he asked me which part of the day I chose to preach. I said the forenoon. As this was the house where I attended meeting when a child, my desire was, if ever an opportunity presented, to preach in that house, to speak upon one particular passage of scripture. The words were these : Luke iv. 16, 17, 18, 19, "*And he came back to Nazareth, where he had been brought up ; and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath-day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias ; and when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written ; The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath an-*

*nointed me to preach the gospel to the poor ; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised ; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."*

It is not for me to say much about the preaching ; but many said, "The Lord is here." Elder Lee was so moved that he cried aloud, and an awful solemnity reigned through the assembly. If ever the spirit of the Lord was upon me while preaching, it was at that time. After preaching, Elder Lee prayed in the most devotional and fervent manner I ever before heard. At noon, we went with James Lewis to his house. Many came in to hear and converse. After taking some refreshment, I mentioned to Elder Lee, that it was expected he would preach that afternoon. Said he, "If you stay here this month, I shall not preach while you stay." I spake again in the afternoon. At the close of the meeting several men desired me to preach in the meeting-house that evening. A meeting was appointed and the house was filled with people. I spake upon these words, 2 Thes. i. 10, "*When he shall come to be glorified in his saints.*" My manner of treating the subject was this. 1. To describe the coming of Christ. 2. How he will be glorified in his saints at his coming. Every person seemed fixed to hear of the coming of Christ, thus to be glorified.



In Connecticut, it is a custom for that part of the assembly addressed by the speaker, to rise up. In my address to the youth, towards the close, a cloud of them arose in every part of the house. This greatly affected me, so that for a short time, I could not speak. The glory of Christ's coming, while I was speaking, was realized by saints and sinners; and in a short time, a general sobbing was heard through the assembly. I do not remember of ever seeing an assembly so generally moved before.

After speaking, a solemn silence reigned through the whole. Elder Lee then closed the meeting by prayer, and the people retired to their homes. By request of the people, I appointed a meeting on Monday, two o'clock, at Capt. Johnson's on the east side of the town. On Tuesday, at Joseph Miller's, on the south side, near the sea. Wednesday evening at Mr. Darrow's, in the centre of the town. These meetings I attended, and was enabled to preach the word with freedom, and to the satisfaction and comfort of many that attended.

On Wednesday evening the chief estates of Lyme attended. This meeting was near the house where I was born and lived till ten or eleven years old. Many knew me when I played in the street, and on this account came to see if any good thing could come out of Nazareth. Thursday, attended the meeting in Elder Miner's meeting-house, and took my farewell from him; this was our last

parting, he died in a few years after. He was a man of God, and greatly owned in the conversion of sinners, and in comforting the children of the Most High, though he held to sprinkling children. After this meeting we rode to Capt. Lee's, and preached in the evening to a large assembly, among whom were many happy youth and others whose God was the Lord.

This meeting ended my appointments in Lyme, the place of my nativity. In nine days I rode through, and almost round the whole town, which is about ten miles square; preached ten times, saw many of my old acquaintance; and became acquainted with many who before were strangers; enjoyed the presence of God, was enabled to comfort the saints, and to leave a solemn warning for the wicked to flee from the wrath to come, and lay hold on eternal life. Several people who lived near the centre of the town, attended almost every meeting; having laid their work aside, that they might hear all that was said,

Friday morning, we took an affectionate farewell from Capt. Lee, his wife and family, never more to meet them on earth. My father was quite overcome, while parting from his old master Lee. He was converted and baptised, when an apprentice to him. They had lived in fellowship as brethren for about forty years. This he considered his last visit to Lyme, and to Capt. Lee's house. We all kneeled down and prayed, sorrowing most of all that we were to meet no more on earth. Of

these three, I only am left alive. That day we rode to Hartford five miles, attended a meeting according to appointment, and on Saturday rode to Hartford city, the place now so noted for the Hartford Convention which met there in December, 1814.

On the first day of the week, preached twice to the baptist church in the old courthouse; broke bread in the afternoon, attended another meeting there in the evening. Was not well satisfied with my labor, if the people were. Speaking and riding so far the week before, exhausted me so much, that though the spirit was willing the flesh was weak. We tarried in Hartford till Tuesday, and that day rode to West-Springfield, and preached in the evening at the baptist meeting-house. Wednesday, we went on our journey home. I parted with my father in Keene, N. H. He went to Woodstock, and I to Salisbury, through the towns of Sullivan, Washington and Warner, and arrived at Salisbury on Saturday morning. In this journey I rode over four hundred miles in twenty-seven days, and spake publicly twenty-one times. Preaching so often at that day, was considered almost too much for any man's constitution; but I found then, as often since, that frequent speaking, unless a man speaks too loud and long is an help to him instead of being injurious.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

Not long from the time of my return from Connecticut, while living in the house given me by the society, Joshua Smith came into Salisbury and preached to the awakening of several who before that time had lived without much concern respecting their danger. Elder Jones also visited me some time before he began to speak in public. Not far from this time, the reformation abated, and a difficulty arose in the church concerning doctrines. Some of the members were strict calvinists, and others free. This caused great trouble, as I felt a necessity of being decided as to one side or the other. The consequences at least were serious indeed.

After I had moved into the other house, near the meeting-house, the people proposed to me to teach the children in the winter of 1796. This I did for a while, but the work was so hard, and the confinement so great, that I did not continue school long, and then determined never again to be confined in that way, unless there was no other way left for me to obtain a living ; that resolve I have maintained to this day. By this time I became very unhappy and discontented in my situation in Salisbury, though the people were ready and willing to support me if I would continue to preach with them. In the summer of 1796, I concluded to preach there only one half of the time. One quarter of the time I agreed to preach in Epping, the



other quarter in Stratham. This agreement I punctually fulfilled.

Towards winter, the baptists in Woburn, Mass. sent to me requesting a visit. I went there not far from December, and preached once. They urged me to preach with them that winter, and I agreed to preach there two thirds of the time till spring. Having agreed to preach with them through the winter, I concluded to carry my wife and child to her father's in Newmarket, as they wished her to spend the winter with them. We shut up our house, and left the town, not expecting to return till spring. The people in Salisbury were very loth to have us leave them, and my wife had a choice in residing there, rather than any other place on earth ; but as I was so discontented there they gave it up.

It was my lot to suffer considerable by the cold through the winter, in journeying from one place to another. Some of the time I preached in Reading, five miles from Woburn, and several times rode to Newmarket, a distance of about fifty miles from Woburn. Through the winter it was my design to live with my family in Woburn, as they were willing to do more for me than they did in Salisbury, and at that time, it was a maxim with many of the baptist preachers, "That it was the greatest duty to go where the people would do the most for us." At that time there were not many places where the baptist people were both able and willing to give a preacher enough to support him, and his family.

In the last of February, 1797, while in Newton, N. H. at the house of Elder John Peak, as I was meditating on my situation, that of my family, and going to Woburn to live, I began to count the cost of what I had contemplated, and concluded, that I should be in a much better situation in Salisbury, than in Woburn. In Salisbury I had a good house almost finished, for which I owed but little. There was also a large meeting-house, large church, and a large and rich society ; a great country around where the people wished me to travel and preach. Putting all these things together, and knowing that my wife preferred that place to any other, I suddenly resolved to try to be contented there ; and to tell the people I was willing to agree to live with them as long as they wished me to stay. With this resolution I went to Salisbury, called the church and society together, and told them what I had concluded on. They readily accepted my proposal, and agreed to give me what they had formerly given. I then returned to Woburn, about ninety miles from Salisbury, settled my affairs with them, sent my books and other things on, and a man in my absence was to go from Boscawen to Newmarket and bring my wife and child to Salisbury in a sleigh, against my return.

I took my leave of the people in Woburn, and of my friends in Boston, particularly my good brother Baldwin, who said, he should have been glad for me to have my home in Woburn. About the middle of March, I left

Woburn for Salisbury, and rode through in two days. The weather the first day was uncommonly cold, and the wind high, so that some did not pretend to ride. I froze myself some the first day, but went on my journey. When at Boscawen, I found my wife and child had not come on. She was unwell, and not able to come, and the young man returned without her. This intelligence cast me down very much, as I knew her situation was such that she would not be able to come till some time in the summer.

After attending to my affairs awhile, I went to Newmarket, and tarried awhile, and then returned. Being alone, I travelled and preached in the different towns through the week, and was generally at Salisbury on Sundays. As I had bound myself to the people there, my conclusion was to make the best of my bondage, and try to be contented.

In the spring, I concluded to finish my house, and be a settled minister as the clergy were, and as was the case with some of the baptist ministers. One chamber I had fixed for my study. In this was a book-case made, and a table to draw out, where I might write my notes, and do other writing with ease and convenience. My house was painted white, and thought whether I might not live in ease as well as other men.

Amidst all this there was a lack, which increased upon me. Sometimes my state of bondage would trouble me, and a secret wish of this kind would revolve in my mind, "O,



that I was as free from all men as I was last winter ; but I am bound and to this I must submit." Frequently my spirit sunk within me, not knowing what course to take. In this time a small family moved into my house ; a young man and his mother. She prepared food for me, and I spent some of my time in reading different books, and much of it in a state of gloominess and sorrow. From the day of my birth till then, I had never in reality known what trouble was, and what I then felt was but the beginning of sorrow.

In the month of June, I was called to visit the people in Sandwich, a place about fifty-five miles northeast of Salisbury. On my way there, I heard my wife was delivered of a son on the tenth of the month, which was one week before I heard of it. Having fulfilled my appointments in Sandwich, I rode to Newmarket on Monday and Tuesday, and found the mother and child well, which was a comfort to me amidst the troubles I then endured. Having tarried there a few days, I returned to Salisbury ; and when my child was about six weeks old, went with a four wheeled carriage, and brought them all to Salisbury safe, all enjoying good health. The arrival of my little family after an absence of about eight months, caused joy to my friends, as they expected that in future that would be the place of our abode for life.

Some reader may perhaps ask, what was the cause of so much trouble and discontent, amidst such surrounding circumstances, calcu-



lated to render a man happy? I answer, the things which contribute to the happiness of christians in general, are not always calculated to make a minister of the gospel happy. A minister of Christ ought always to be free from all men, that he may be servant to all. When I first began to preach, my mind and body was free, then I was happy. Through ignorance, I often bound myself by the six-month or year. When my time was out, I used my liberty for a few weeks, and then bound myself for another year, not thinking, or meaning any evil in so doing. Many times the question would arise, why am I so unhappy in my engagements by the year, when many who are settled for life are unhappy the moment they see any danger of being dismissed? The reason was, because it was never my duty nor theirs to be settled in such a manner. When my mind was right in preaching, it was led to travel and preach as Christ and the apostles did; but when confined by the year, I could not go, let my desire to travel be ever so great. I hope that every young man who is called to preach, will keep free to travel and turn many to righteousness, without being confined by a fine meeting-house, salary, or the importunity of friends who would limit him to bounds not set by his Master.

Not long after my family returned, my old trouble, discontent, increased beyond what it had been before; but being bound, I thought best to bear it in silence. It had such an ef-

fect on me, that I could not read with any satisfaction, and at last was so dejected, that some days I shut myself in the chamber, and kept every person out ; and for several days, hardly spake to any one. In the month of October, of that year, as I was digging potatoes in my garden, and meditating on my state of bondage, this question arose in my mind. Was it right for me to bind myself as I did last spring ? The answer was, no. Is it right for me to keep bound in unrighteousness ? The answer was, no. Why may I not be free ? You may. When ? Now. What followed was this : "I AM FREE." There my bondage ended, and I took up my basket of potatoes as a free man, and carried them into my cellar, and considered them the property of a free man. The next step was to tell the people I could not stand to my agreement, and must be disengaged from it, come life or death.

When this was noised abroad, some of our principal society men were sorely displeased, as they concluded there was no dependance on such an unstable person. Some were grieved ; and some said, let him go if he will. Some said they would be my friends, stay or go. They finally concluded to let me go ; but a very few of the set ones said, they would never hear me again, and I believe they kept their words ever after.

As soon as my engagement was up, my heart leaped for joy, as a prisoner would to be set free from a long confinement in prison.

I now considered myself free to travel and preach wherever duty called.

Soon after this my brother came there to preach, and being dismissed, I went into the pew, instead of the pulpit. This grieved many and was acceptable to a few. In the month of November, I went to Woburn, Reading and Boston, and preached in each of these towns. Not being engaged anywhere, the people in Reading and Woburn requested me to preach with them again. This I agreed to, but meant to be free. My wife the winter before, had visited Woburn, and liked the people, but did not like the place; and was unwilling to move there, and leave her good house in Salisbury, for one or two rooms in another man's house. As I had conversed with Mr. Baldwin and Dr. Stillman, of Boston, who advised me to move there, I agreed to carry my family down in January, 1798; and returned home in December, having engaged part of an house belonging to Deacon-Josiah Convers, a member of the baptist church there.

When I told my wife that my determination was to move to Woburn the next month, she was sore aggrieved at the thought of leaving her house and many good friends; but as some were offended, and as I had concluded to move there, she submitted to it, and made preparation to go. In January, we sent the chief of our furniture on, and went ourselves and the children, to Newmarket. There my wife and her children tarried till Febru-



ary, and I went on to Woburn, to get the house ready for them. Deacon Convers finished one room in his house that month, and was to finish a chamber in the spring ; this one room was all we had that winter.

In February, I went to Newmarket after my family ; and after some days, there being but little snow, we sat out with the youngest child for Woburn. When we had gone as far as Kingston plain, twelve miles from Newmarket, the snow was mostly gone, and as the south wind blew, it melted away fast. We were then twelve miles from Haverhill, where we meant to put up that night. The only way for us to proceed on our journey, was for me to walk, and let the horse draw the load on the ground. This I did, but it was a tiresome day's work for us all. The road about two miles from Haverhill was so miry, that the horse had hard work to get through. We arrived in Haverhill late in the evening, and put up with David Morse, who kindly received us, and made us as comfortable as he could.

My wife, who was very slender, took such a cold that day, that she was confined to her bed the day following. As I had an appointment in Woburn, which could not be dispensed with, I left her and went on my horse, and attended my meeting ; leaving her to come on in the stage, as soon as she was able. In about four days she came ; and so through many difficulties, we all got safe to land, and were kindly received by our friends. This



was again beginning the world anew. We were strangers, and depended entirely on our friends for help ; but a way opened for our escape through the whole.

Soon after my removal to Woburn, the church wished me to be dismissed from the church in Salisbury, and recommended to them as a member in good standing, to be received as a member with them. This they refused to do, though they had brought no charge against me ; but they requested me to visit them that every thing between them and the society might be settled honorably. In the spring, or fore part of summer, I went there, and then found what the difficulty was. Though they had given me a deed of the house and land, and had said, if I went away in six months, it should be mine ; and though I had tarried not far from four years, and had served them according to the best of my ability ; yet now they wished it back again, or the money they paid for it ; and I found that they meant to withhold a dismission and recommendation, unless I gave them an obligation to give them the money whenever the house was sold. As I had never coveted their silver nor gold, house nor land, I gave them a writing which satisfied them, and then my character stood so fair, that the church and society gave me as good a recommendation as I needed ; and was so dismissed, that when received by the other church, I was dismissed from their special watch and care.

Here I first felt the strength of the cords of sectarian bondage. It was a practice among the baptists at that time, to hold a member till he was received by another church, by his and their request ; if by any means they chose to hold him, they kept him to do what they pleased, according to their law. This is bondage, and contrary to the perfect law of liberty.

Having obtained my dismissal and recommendation, at the price of *one hundred and forty-nine dollars*, and cost, I returned to Woburn, well pleased to think I had got clear without having my character smutted. Presenting my dismissal, and two recommendations to the church, I was unanimously received as a member in full fellowship ; as one of their faith and order. The treatment which I received from the baptist preachers and churches in Massachusetts, at that time, proved to my satisfaction, that I stood high in their esteem. I was invited to preach in their most popular assemblies, and received into the company of what they called their first people, though I ever felt myself unworthy of the then honorable treatment received from them.

As one object in going to Woburn was to gain useful knowledge, by having an opportunity to converse with such knowing men as I considered Dr. Stillman and other baptist preachers to be, and to read such books as they possessed ; when in their company, I calculated to gain all I could from them. I was however frequently disappointed, as they

had not that knowledge of the scriptures which their high titles gave me occasion to suppose they possessed.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

From the first of my appearing in public, I had been in the habit of dressing plain, though I sometimes dressed in *black*. As my residence was near Boston, and being frequently there, the two Boston ministers often made mention of my plain dress; and particularly Mr. Baldwin, who was a very fashionable man. He one day said, "you are not yet fifty years old;" intimating that at such an age, my dress might be suitable. In this I soon began to conform; and went on till they with me, left that simplicity which at first was seen among the baptists. I was soon dressed in fashionable black, a large three cornered hat, and black silk gloves, to wear in the meeting-house in "*dog-days*." (Isa. lvi. 10, 11, 12.)

My salary in Woburn, was *three hundred and thirty-three* dollars, and *thirty-three* cents per year. This was sufficient to support my small family, and be in the fashion of the baptist clergy around me.

The first year of my residence in Woburn, the Lord blest my labors among the people there, in Reading, and Malden. Several in these towns were converted to God, and baptised. Through the summer of 1798, the as-

sembly increased, and a goodly number were added to the church. One thing which caused the assembly to increase, was the situation of the congregational society in that town. They had a settled clergyman by the name of Sargent ; perhaps as poor a speaker as ever ascended the pulpit stairs. They had for several years labored hard to get rid of him ; but he still remained among them. I was told, that when the people complained to him of the badness of his voice, he said the *sounding-board* was too high, and that if the sounding-board was lowered, he could speak better. A parish meeting was called for this purpose. The moderator introduced the subject of altering the sounding-board. One man by the name of Jesse Richardson, a shrewd old man, rose up instantly, and said, " Mr. Moderator, I move, that the sound *under* the board be altered first." This prevented any further proceedings as to the sounding-board, and after that, the great study was how to get rid of the sound under the board.

After much labor, councils, and the members joining the baptist society, they gave him about five hundred dollars to go off, and carry his voice with him. This is according to the best of my recollection.

Though we lived in peace, there was one difficulty among us. The laws of Massachusetts were such, that no minister could marry people out of the town where he lived, unless a town was destitute of a settled minister, and no minister was allowed to marry where



he lived, unless he was settled as the pastor of the church where he preached. This made some of my friends uneasy, as I could not marry them, nor get the money which the law gave the minister for every couple he married. The question arose, "What shall be done?" The ministers in Boston said, "You must be *installed*." This I was entirely ignorant of, as no such thing was mentioned in the bible; but as they said it would do, and as they were learned men and to be depended on, I consented to be *installed*, to have the benefit of the laws, as a "state minister."

November 14, 1798, was the day appointed for this new-fangled ceremony. When the day came, a great multitude attended. The baptist ministers who attended, as they were stiled in the Boston Chronicle, where the following: Rev. Dr. Stillman, Rev. Dr. Smith, Rev. Mr. Baldwin, and Rev. Mr. Grafton. As I had been ordained at Lee, some years before, and as Mr. Baldwin had heard my experience then, given me the right hand of fellowship; as I had a good recommendation from the baptist church and society in Salisbury; it was thought unnecessary by the council to examine my experience, call to preach, or system of doctrine. The council was held in the morning, and the chief done was to know how I stood with the church, what salary I was to have, &c. and to agree what part each one should take in the meeting-house. All this was agreed on, and at the hour appointed, we went out of the chamber and went

to the congregational meeting-house, which they had graciously favored us with to perform our popery in. The day I was installed was an *high day* with us. We made something of a splendid appearance as it respected the ignorant. We had two *Doctors of Divinity*; one or two A. M's. and we all wore bands.

When we came out of the counsel chamber, and formed a procession to walk in *baptist clerical order* to the meeting-house, we looked as much like the cardinals coming out of the conclave after electing a pope, as our practice was like theirs, and the chief difference was in the name, and the color of our clothes. Doctor Stillman preached a good sermon, from Eph. iii. 8, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." After preaching, Doctor Smith gave the charge; Mr. Baldwin the right hand of fellowship, which was the second time I received it from him. And to this day he has never given me, nor the public, a scriptural reason why he privately withdrew it from me. After performing, this *man made anti-christain ceremony*, called by its makers, *installation*; done to enable me to perform one thing which the pope in ancient days declared his right only to deal out; that is, to marry people according to the religious state law of Massachusetts; we all returned back to the council chamber, and

were more merry than the rule given to Christ's ministers would allow us to be.

While setting and conversing together, Doctor Smith said to me, "I advise you to wear a band on Lord's days." [This was a piece of clerical foppery I always hated, and when I walked with it on, I then thought I acted with it as a pig does when he is first yoked; almost strike it with his knees, for fear he shall hit it. I should not have worn it that day, but Doctor Stillman, who was as fond of such foppery as a little girl is of fine baby rags, brought one and put it on me.] I asked the Doctor what the band meant? He replied, "That as I lived near the metropolis, it would make me appear respectable; and besides, said he, it will shew that you are an ordained minister." I then asked him how ministers came first to wear bands? He said, "He supposed it was taken from the *high priest's breast-plate*." My reply was, if that is the way bands came, I will never wear one again; for my *high priest* has his on in glory; and for me to wear a band, would be taking that to myself which belongs only to him. From that day to this I have held as abominable, the *band*, *surplice*, and the other part of the clerical, anti-christian attire of the mother of harlots, and abomination of the earth.

The week after my installation, the following advertisement of my return to Babylon, and partaking of her plagues, appeared in the *Boston Chronicle*:



## INSTALLED,

“At Woburn, on Wednesday the 14th, the Rev. ELIAS SMITH, pastor of the baptist church in that place. The solemnity was introduced by an excellent anthem, which was well sung. Then followed the introductory prayer, and a sermon from Eph. iii. 8, by Rev. Dr. Stillman. The charge by the Rev. Dr. Smith, of Haverhill. The right hand of fellowship by the Rev. Mr. Baldwin, of Boston; and the concluding prayer by the Rev. Mr. Grafton, of Newton. The services were attended by a numerous and respectable assembly in the congregational meeting-house, with the use of which they were accommodated by the parish, in a most friendly manner.”

✚ This operation I went through, and though I did not see the propriety of it from the scriptures, yet thought there was no hurt in doing it. “The Lord pardon thy servant in this thing.” 2 Kings, v. 18.

Our affairs being thus regulated according to law, there was a prospect of proceeding regularly; and I was determined to be steady, as they termed it; that is to be contented in my new confinement. During my stay at Woburn, which was till the year 1801, several things took place which shall be mentioned here.

1, Not long after being installed, several became indifferent, as to paying their part of the hundred pounds; the society had agreed to give me by the year. This caused a dif-



sculty, as to my living. To remedy this evil, I proposed to the society to loan me *one thousand dollars*; the interest of which should be instead of fifty pounds. This they agreed to; and let me have a part of the money. Having this, I entered into partnership with two men, and opened a store in Woodstock, Vt. This business laid a foundation for much trouble afterwards; as my mind was entangled with the affairs of this world, which prevented my pleasing him who had called me to be a soldier; and before the business was ended, my mind was brought almost into a state of despair.

2. While at Woburn, in consequence of a connection with the baptist ministers and others around, I became quite too respectable for a minister of Christ. They dressed me in black, from head to foot; and on some occasions a part of my dress was silk, with a large three cornered hat, and cloak of the best. I built an house there; kept an horse and carriage, and lived in ease as other salary men do.

Being so respectable, I began to write my sermons, but never carried them to the meeting-house. This was being so lame as to need one crutch; those baptist ministers who read their notes, have the gout to that degree, that they are obliged to use two crutches, and go hard and slow with them. The baptists in Boston frequently requested me to preach with them; all these things served by little and little to draw my mind from the simplic-

city that is in Christ Jesus. I once told Mr. Baldwin, we were going back to the place from whence we came out. His reply was, "We wish to make our denomination respectable as well as the rest." Here it ended for a time.

3. George Washington died at the time of my residence at Woburn, and the people thought they must take some public notice of it. Of course a day was appointed. Dr. Jedidiah Morse, of Charleston, was requested to deliver the discourse. At the day appointed he came dressed in his surplice and band, with his old notes which he had read in Charleston, and the prayer on a piece of paper, which he had said over. As I was to make the first prayer, and Daniel Oliver the last, he shewed me his long made prayer, thinking it might help me to pray on the occasion; but like Saul's armour, it was too *long* for me, and I could not go with it.

At the distinguished hour, we all went through the mud to the meeting-house, which had much black cloth about it, as a mark of mourning for Washington. After some singing, praying, &c. the *Reverend Doctor* began his discourse in about the following words, "What meaneth all these funeral airs? Why all these marks of mourning? What sighs are these that heave the breast? Why these tears that steal down the sorrowful cheek? Methinks some one says, Washington is dead." It was, "flat as the canvass, and cold as the marble." There was not a

sigh nor a tear in the meeting-house, excepting what his old notes contained. When this parade was over, the people dispersed. Dr. Morse received ten dollars, it was said, for his day's work, "and went to his place."

Soon after this, the baptists had a meeting on the occasion ; dressed the pulpit with two yards of *black broad cloth*, and after meeting, it was presented to me ; so that with the other clergy, I became the possessor of another *black coat*, for preaching Washington's funeral sermon.

4. While at Woburn, I first became acquainted with the different political principles of this country. Until that time my mind was taken up with other things, and was undetermined whether our form of government or monarchy, was the best. At that time the writings of OLD SOUTH, were published in the Boston Chronicle, which I read with attention, and became acquainted with the nature of *monarchy* and REPUBLICANISM, and was then certain that a republican government was in its nature as well calculated for the interest of the people, as monarchy is for the king. I became a republican from principle, and so must remain, or be dishonest. All the further information received since, has only confirmed my mind in what I then believed *just and true*.

5. It was at Woburn, that my mind was first troubled about what is called the *trinity*. Some years before, Dr. S. Shepard had told me that three persons could not be one per-



son ; and that the text brought to prove the trinity, 1 John, v. 7, did not say, *thræe persons*, but three, without saying what the three were. He also said, that where Watts said, “ When God the mighty maker died,” it ought to have read, “ When Christ the mighty Saviour died ;” because said he, God never died. This I remembered, and often after preaching, was much troubled on account of my ignorance of that *mystery*, or rather mistake.

Sometimes it was almost a settled point with me, never to preach again, until I could see how three persons could be one being.

The baptist ministers said it was a mystery, and so it remained with me till within a few years. What is called *election* greatly agitated my mind about the same time. Dr. Stillman held that Christ died for the elect only ; Dr. Baldwin held that there was a propriety in preaching the gospel to all, though but a small part would finally be benefited by it, and these were given to Christ in the covenant of redemption before the world was. These two men differed so much on that point of doctrine, that in a meeting each said to the other, if I held as you do, I would preach no more.

I had for many years held with Dr. Baldwin, but by reading the articles of the church in Woburn, I found it stated “ that the death of Christ was special and particular, that is, for the elect only ;” and finding it so there, concluded to preach according to the articles.



One day, in the meeting-house, I told the people that according to the articles of the church, the fact was plainly this; all that were elected, or chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world would be saved and no others. Such could not miss of salvation, and the remainder must unavoidably be lost, because they were not elected.

This gave a great shock to many who heard, and the next day, some who before had been serious, went and joined the dancing school in that town. This troubled me much, and when I asked a young man why he did so, his reply was, that my preaching the Sunday before caused him to do as he had. He then said thus to me, "You told us that all given to Christ, or the elect would be saved, and that their salvation could not be prevented. Now said he, I believe it will be so. If I am one of the elect I shall as certainly be saved in attending the dancing school as at any other place; if I am not one of the elect, nothing I can do will prevent my being lost at last." He added, "I do not find any happiness in religion, and must have some diversion, and this is as innocent as any thing I can do. To live unhappy here, and be eternally miserable hereafter, is dreadful to me. I conclude it best to take what comfort I can in a civil way; and as I believe your doctrine, I am as safe so, as in praying and going to meeting in an unconverted state."

This conversation brought me to a stand, and I left the young man without much reply to what he said. After leaving him the following passed through my mind: "What the young man says is rational. This is the practical part of my preaching. Paul's preaching never had such an effect upon his hearers, and such preaching is not according to the doctrine of Christ." My mind was seriously employed in examining the doctrine contained in the church book, and upon a careful and candid examination, I concluded that such doctrine was not the doctrine of Christ, and was determined to give it up as wrong, and soon reduced all my religion to two things, "*believe right, and do right.*" This laid a foundation for examining every part of doctrine by the scriptures, and in consequence of this, for many years, the ignorant, the partial, and the dishonest, have considered me an heretic, and some have said, "not fit to live." About this time, I told Elder Peak my religion was reduced to two things, believe right and do right. Some of my acquaintance told me that from this he took occasion to say, I was either a *Deist* or *Universalist*.

6. My situation at Woburn as an installed minister, caused me to feel at times very unhappy, especially after receiving such a shock, respecting the doctrine I had preached, and must preach to be acceptable there. The only remedy I knew of was to go to another place. This was my determination.

about the year 1799. As my house was there, I concluded to try my bondage a little longer, knowing if I went away, the people would take my house and about all I had, for the money they had loaned me. They had given me between one and two hundred dollars towards building my house ; this I had given my word should be paid back, if I went from them within seven years.

### CHAPTER XXX.

In the year 1804, my mind was fixed to go from that place, come life or death. The company had opened a store in Salisbury, N. H. The house and store was mine, and I concluded to go there and attend to my business, and preach on Sundays, and try to be a free man.

Mr. Baldwin, of Boston, heard of my determination, and came to visit me, hoping to dissuade from going from Woburn. He took me into Deacon Convers' pasture, and told me the necessity of remaining with the people, and in connection with the baptists in that region. I told him of my unfitness to perform the duties of a pastor. Said he, " if you are not qualified I am not. We acknowledge you equal to any of us in preaching, and before us in the knowledge of the scriptures."

After hearing all his arguments, I told him my mind and body were never designed for

such narrow limits as my situation there fixed me in ; and that it was a most distressing thought, to be confined all my days to preach to two or three hundred people, when there was thousands around to hear. Here the conversation ended, and we returned to the house.

For many weeks my mind was greatly troubled on account of the doctrine I had preached, my connection with the baptists, the situation of my family, the trouble to be endured in consequence of leaving that place, and my connection with the church. By leaving them, my house, and all there must be given up ; and I was quite certain the most influential would be against me. My final determination was to risk all the consequence of being dismissed from what they called my pastoral charge.

This was done in manner and form. A committee was appointed to settle with me. They owed me according to anti-christian bargain, for preaching calvinism, about one hundred and seventy dollars, and I took their note for the same. This was a sin committed ignorantly, which I believe is forgiven me, and which no poverty I hope will ever persuade me to do again. Deacon Josiah Convers took my house at one thousand dollars, and obliged me to allow him one hundred dollars for the land he had given me to build the house upon.

Those who had given me timber, boards, work, &c. called for their money back. One of



the church, who subscribed four dollars, which he paid in four sticks of timber, eight inches square, and eighteen feet long, sent in his bill thus :

*Elias Smith, to ————, Dr.*

*To 4 sticks of timber 10 inches square, 20 feet long, \$6,00.*

I told his son-in-law, the timber would not have been so long and large, had the trees stood growing till then ; that he might measure them if he pleased. I also shewed him the subscription paper. He took the four dollars and “ went his way.”

Some who gave me work, brought in a bill, at seventy-five cents per day ; others I hired charged but fifty cents. I allowed all their demands, and settled with the whole, with my house and note for preaching.

Some have tried to make strangers believe I wronged the people there, by keeping their money, but if this does not satisfy them, where the wrong was, let them go to Woburn, or to the county records in Cambridge. It did not distress them at all to take all from me they could, after I had labored with them several years, receiving only a scanty living ; nor did it distress the leaders to do all in their power to injure my character, and prevent my future usefulness. They have since found their punishment, for the wrong done to one who ever wished them well.

Having settled my affairs, in the month of September, 1801, I took my everlasting leave

from installations, and hireling plans, such bondage as I had endured there, and sat out in a chaise, with my wife and three children, (one of which was born there, April 22, 1799,) for Salisbury, N. H. and arrived there in a few days.

At the time of leaving Woburn, it was my determination to preach no more, if I could remain in silence, choosing to labor hard for a living, rather than be so tormented with the doctrines I had preached, the bondage endured, and the cruel treatment of such as would be my friends when bound to them, and enemies when free from such bondage. After my removal to Salisbury, my time was taken up through the week in attending the store, and every Sunday in preaching, either in Northfield, or some town near.

Sometime in November, of that year, my youngest brother, who had embraced the doctrine called universalism, came to preach at Salisbury in the baptist meeting-house. I attended the meeting and hearing him describe the inconsistencies of calvinism, my mind was greatly taken hold of by his new doctrine, and though in the evening after his preaching, I had confounded him, yet a thought passed through my mind that his doctrine might be true, or at least more merciful than the doctrine of Calvin. As my mind ran upon the doctrine, I read *Winchester's dialogues*, *Cheney's writings*, and *Huntington's "calvinism improved, or salvation for all men."* Being convinced that calvinism

was wrong, I concluded that of course, universalism must be right, and my mind consented that it was so.

Having made this new discovery, as it was considered, the change in my mind was soon sounded abroad; some were mad, some pleased, and many real christians grieved. One Sunday I preached twice upon *universalism*, in the congregational meeting-house at Boscawen, under many embarrassments, on account of the many plain passages of scripture which testified against that doctrine, as well as against calvinism. That doctrine led me into the company of those whose conduct was contrary to the doctrine of Christ, and it also caused me to offend against the generation of God's children. I remained in it about fifteen days, and was very unhappy through the whole. My mind was ensnared, and I felt myself in a situation from which it was not in my power to extricate myself. I found that my mind was still entangled with the old *calvinistic doctrine*, and that about all the difference between *calvinism* and *universalism* was in the number. One taught that a part were safe being predestinated; the other, that all were safe upon the same plan.

While meditating upon these doctrines and my own situation, and saying, what shall I do? there was a gentle whisper to my understanding in these words: "*Drop them both, and search the scriptures.*" This command was immediately consented to; and instantly my mind was freed from the

entanglement before experienced, and immediately I sung, "Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler, the snare is broken, and we are escaped, our help is in the name of the Lord." From that moment, my mind was delivered from *calvinism*, *universalism*, and *deism*, three doctrines of men, which people love, who do not love holiness. These three things I had been troubled with at times, for many years, but they left me then, and for fourteen years I have believed them to be contrary to the doctrine of Christ, and so I consider them now, (Jan. 30, 1816,) and so must, unless I reject the doctrine of Christ.

Being convinced of the error of *calvinism* and *universalism*, I requested leave of the people in Salisbury to preach one Sunday, publicly to renounce *universalism*, and give them my reasons for rejecting the doctrine as false. Many people attended, but some of the *universalists*, after the people assembled, objected to my giving the reasons for rejecting the doctrine.

Anthony Whitmore, Esq. spoke against it in his pew, before I began to speak. Capt. David Pettingill, said, that the preacher ought to have liberty to give his mind publicly, and motioned that all who were in favor of it would rise from their seats. The greater part arose, and he told me the way was clear to proceed.

My text was this, 2 Cor. iv. 2, "*But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty,*



*not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully ; but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."*

It was generally thought that Mr. Whitmore dreaded the reasons which would be brought for rejecting universalism as false doctrine. The meeting ended in peace, and the people retired, but Mr. W. was greatly mortified and displeased.

Having passed through this scene, I about determined soon to desist from preaching, being at loss what to preach to be consistent. Having lost all my system, my mind was prepared to search the scriptures, but being engaged in worldly business, had but little time to read, and therefore concluded as the state of things then were, to preach on Sundays, and attend to my business through the week as other men do. In this situation I remained for several weeks. On a certain day, being alone, and meditating on my situation, there came a voice as from heaven, to my understanding, which said, "*Give an account of thy stewardship ; for thou mayest be no longer steward.*" This came with power to my heart, and I said, if this takes place, I am forever undone. There was placed before me Christ and the world, and a choice for me ; which was to give up all for Christ, or give him up for what there is without Christ. My choice was at once made. I said Christ is all, let me have this, and the rest I willingly renounce.

My conclusion was that entering into the mercantile business was wrong, as my work was something else; and wished myself free. I soon became greatly distressed on account of leaving the work of preaching so much as I had, and knew not how to get free from my present entanglement. In January, 1802, I was brought almost into a state of despair; my evidence of being ever converted to God was almost wholly gone; I had no enjoyment in the things of the world, nor in religion. I considered myself the most wretched being on earth, forsaken of God and man, and on the borders of despair.

About this time, peace took place between France and England. This had a great effect on imported goods. In a short time our goods would not sell in the country for what we gave for them in Boston. This with my other trouble, almost unfitted me for any kind of business for some time. Our capital was small, and we owed between four and five thousand dollars, and but a small part of the capital belonged to me. The other two men said, if I would give up what I had, give them a deed of my house there, to make our creditors safe, they would take the whole upon themselves, clear me from all the debts, and give me an obligation, that if they got through with the debts, with what stock they had, and debts due, they would give me back a deed of the house.

This proposal I took up with, having nothing left then but an horse and chaise, and my

furniture ; and owing my private debts not far from six hundred dollars. This was a distressing time to me and my family. My wife remained unmoved through the whole, believing we should be provided for, though we had in one year fallen from affluence to poverty, from honor to contempt. One of the company told his brother-in-law, whom I owed, that if he wished, he could get my horse and chaise, (as I was told,) and that was all he could get. These I agreed to give up after carrying my family to my father-in-law, at Newmarket.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

In the month of March, 1802, my distress of mind abated, and I felt some hope in God, that I should yet praise him ; and concluded that my disobedience was the cause of so much outward and inward trouble. In April, I carried my family to Newmarket, and my father-in-law was both able and willing to keep them, till I could find an home for them. My health was greatly impaired, by reason of the trouble which came on me.

My flesh had wasted away, and many concluded my days would soon be numbered. My horse and carriage was at that time given up to the man I owed, and what that did not pay, he never drove me to pay. I had at that time, *forty-five dollars*, which was all I had on earth, and saw no way to pay what was honestly due to others.

Soon after my arrival at Newmarket, Deacon Josiah Convers, and Abel Winn, from Woburn, came to see me. The latter I owed fifty dollars. My father-in-law signed the note with me, and I paid it at the time. I owed a man in Woburn about fourteen dollars, which I wished Deacon Convers to pay. He would not, unless I would give him a bill of sale of all my furniture at Woburn, and he give me his word that he would give it up when I paid the debt. The debt I paid, but he has not to this day given me up the bill of sale; and there the furniture remains, for ought I know.

In the spring of 1802, I walked on foot, and preached where I was requested, though much cast down, and but little courage to do any kind of business. In this time it was my constant prayer that the Lord would so order it, that I might have a place on earth, where my family could be at home, while I was travelling to preach the gospel. After I had travelled on foot awhile, Broadstreet Gilman, of Newmarket, gave me the use of an horse for several months.

In June, the baptist brethren in Epping, at their own expence brought my furniture from Salisbury; bought and gave me a cow, as a present. In June we went there to live, and were well provided for through the summer.

There was but one of my creditors who threatened to distress me; his wrath I appeased by sending him twenty-five dollars out



of my forty-five ; and my watch for security six months, telling him if that was not enough, he might take my cloak also. My watch stood bound for me six months, at which time I paid him all and he returned the watch.

For many years my mind had been exercised upon the situation of professors of religion, and particularly upon the different denominations who considered themselves christians. When in my twenty-fourth year, I believed there would be a people bearing a name different from all the denominations then in this country ; but what they would be called, I then could not tell. In the spring of 1802, having rejected the doctrine of *Calvin* and *universalism*, to search the scriptures to find truth, I found the name which the followers of Christ ought to bear ; which was CHRISTIANS. Acts xi. 26. My mind being fixed upon this as the right name, to the exclusion of all the popular names in the world, in the month of May, at a man's house in Epping, N. H. by the name of Lawrence, where I held a meeting, and spake upon the text, Acts xi. 26. I ventured for the first time, softly to tell the people, that the name CHRISTIAN was enough for the followers of Christ, without the addition of the word *baptist*, *methodist*, &c. It was in this meeting that I first, in a gentle manner, spake against the catechism, as an invention of men. All this was done in much trembling, on account of what might follow.

In the forepart of this year, two men in Portsmouth, N. H. George Osborne and Daniel Mason, who were baptists, obtained leave of the selectmen to have baptist preachers attend a meeting in the north school-house, every other Wednesday evening. Having obtained the school-house, they applied to Elder Henry Pottle of Stratham, to preach with them, and to invite other preachers to visit the town and preach, as this was the first open door the baptists ever had to preach in that town.

At the time he received this invitation, I was in Stratham, and he requested me to go with him. We appointed a time to go, which was two weeks from that day. At the day appointed we went to Portsmouth, and put up with Levi Wiggins, who lived about one mile and an half out of town. Here we left our horses, and after dinner, walked into the town, and went first to see Charles Peirce, a book-seller, who was a baptist. With him we soon became acquainted, as he expected us at that time.

As the meeting was to be in the school-house the next evening, he invited me to preach in the place he had formerly used as a printing-office ; which he had turned into a place for holding evening meetings. This first meeting was held Tuesday evening, the second week in July, 1802. The room was quite full of people, and all appeared attentive to hear the stranger.

A meeting was appointed for me the next evening at the north school-house, and as

many people attended as the house would contain. Among the many was Joseph Buckminster. D. D. one of the ministers of the town. The people conducted decently, and at the close retired in peace. By request, I appointed to preach there again in two weeks from that evening. The next day we went to Kittery, to visit Moses Safford, who had spoken some in public.

About that time there was much uneasiness among the young baptist preachers in Newhampshire, on account of some opposition to exhortations and other liberty used at the time of their annual associations. Some of the old ministers had opposed it. Elder Pottle, who preached a free gospel wished for a reformation in this thing. This he mentioned, and wished me to join him in it. He was the first who laid a foundation in my mind for a general separation from the calvinistic baptists. He proposed this to Moses Safford, who agreed to join with him. This matter was proposed to others who fell in with it, and in the course of the summer, we held a meeting at Sandbornton called, "The christian conference." The following preachers were members of the conference : Samuel Shepard ; Isaiah Stone ; Henry Pottle ; Uriah Smith ; Eliphalet Merrill ; John Crocket ; Thomas Paul ; Elder Webster ; Moses Safford ; Samuel Applebee ; Elias Smith. The design of these men was understood to be this ; to leave behind every thing in name, doctrine, or practice, not found

in the new-testament. Whither they thought at first this would carry them I cannot tell ; though I conclude they did not, for when they saw where it would end, the greater part went back, and apologized for their conduct, and remain with the baptists to this day. I was confident at first, that if we attended to our proposition, it would end in a final separation from the baptist denomination. So it proved in the end.

The conference in Sandbornton I attended, and the meeting at Portsmouth, at the time appointed. What was said of the other meeting caused more to attend than the house would hold. The next evening a meeting was appointed in Mr. Peirce's room. This was full, and the yard, as far as the people could hear. The meeting at Portsmouth, every other Wednesday evening, I attended till September. The preaching differed so much from reading sermons, that it drew the attention of many, and at every meeting they wished to hear again of this matter ; which caused some alarm among the ministers, who were in general settled upon their lees.

In August, I was requested to preach at 5 o'clock on Sunday, in the south meeting-house ; and the meeting was appointed. That day I preached at Stratham, and a brother from Portsmouth, (Jeremiah Low,) was at meeting, to go down with me at the time. We were there at the hour, but the house was shut, and no signs of a meeting. Brother Low went to his house, and I walked up Market-



street, alone, and went to see Mr. C. Peirce, to know why the meeting was not appointed. At first he was loth to tell me, but at last said that one of the ministers of the town, had been into the country, and returned with the following report: "*That Mr. Smith had taken seven hundred dollars from the people at Woburn; that he went to Boston and laid out the money for goods and fled into the country; that the people pursued him, took away the goods, and let him run,*" &c. I asked Mr. P. if it looked like truth, to find a thief, or robber, and then let him run at large? He said no. I assured him that this was a false report, and wholly without foundation. Mr. Peirce to be certain, wrote to Dr. Stillman, of Boston, who wrote back, that he never had heard of any such thing; and directed him to write to Deacon Convers, of Woburn. This he did, and the Deacon wrote, that though there were some differences between me and the church, yet they had nothing against my moral character. This, in a few days, upset the clergyman's plan; I tarried that week, and preached in the universalist meeting-house, having obtained consent of the minister, and the principal men of the society.

By enquiring it was found, that the report of the clergyman, was reported to him by another clergyman in the country. That man I visited, and asked if he had told Mr. ——— as he reported. He said he told it as he heard it from the *Reverend Mr. ———*

and not as the truth. Here, the story ran out, and died in their hands. Not far from this time, I visited Dr. Buckminster, in company with Mr. Peirce. He asked me if I held to close communion, &c. and soon began upon baptism. Like the men of Laish, he was destitute of weapons. He brought up the old *fend-off*; *into* means *unto*. "Christ (said he) went *into* the mountain. Do you think there was an hole that he went into?" Sir, it is altogether likely; for Paul says, "They wandered *in* dens and caves of the earth." Have you been *into* your garden to-day Mr. Buckminster? Yes, said he. "Is there an *hole* where you go down?" No, said he, I have been within the enclosure. So, said I, they went into the water, not to the edge of it; but within the enclosure. So we ended the matter.

From what was done by the clergy, and their friends; what was said by the people; I found there was on the clergy side, a spirited opposition to my preaching in the town, while at the same time, a considerable number of respectable people were determined to have me preach as often as I could attend. There were a few real christians, and as few as I ever knew in so large a town. These knew the gospel sound, and welcomed the messengers of peace. The preaching and opposition caused no small stir about that way.

The last meeting I attended in August, my mind was much troubled on account of the

opposition. The man where I put up, had not much courage ; and his wife was quite opposed to my preaching there, or being in the house. At this time, I was obliged to go out of his house at 11 o'clock at night, as she would not consent for me to stay through the night.

The man went with me to Jeremiah Low's house ; here I tarried in peace till morning. My mind was much troubled, on account of the tumult, so that sleep departed from me. In the night, it was made manifest to me, I believe, by the spirit of truth, that God would work in Portsmouth, and that I should see a glorious reformation, and turning to God among old and young. This I told the brother who slept in the bed with me. He hoped it would be so, but feared I should be disappointed. I had such a sense of the situation of the people, and the ministers who cried peace, when there was no peace, that I could scarce refrain from going through the streets in the night to warn the people to flee from the wrath to come. From that time it was fixed in my mind, that God would pour out his spirit before many months. This took place the next March and April.

The first Sunday in September of that year, by request, I attended a meeting in the north school-house. This by some, was considered almost treason. A considerable number had resolution sufficient to get by the meeting-houses, and those who were going another

way. From this time till December, I preached in Portsmouth half the time.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

In the course of the summer of 1802, new and strange things were made manifest to my understanding. For many years I had thought much upon the doctrines and conduct of the state clergy; but the whole was a mystery to me. One day in the month of August, as I sat in my hired house, in Epping, meditating upon the opposition the clergy in Portsmouth, and other places made to my preaching the doctrine of the new-testament, a thought passed through my mind, that the clergy in general were settled upon a plan exactly opposite to the new testament. This led me to compare their doctrine, laws, conduct, manner of preaching, titles, and manner of being supported, with the new-testament; by which I found, they were, as to their plan, what the new-testament calls *anti-christ*. Here I first began to write. Until that time all my communications were with my tongue. Though people had frequently requested me to write, my determination was, never to publish any book, till over thirty years old. I was now thirty-three years and two months old.

With the above subject in mind, I took my pen, and began to compare the apostles and clergy together, in the following manner :



*Apostles.* "And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" Rom. x. 15.

*Clergy.* "And how shall they preach, except they be sent to the college?"

*Apostles.* "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new-testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." 2 Cor. iii. 6.

*Clergy.* "Which (the college) also hath made us popular ministers of morality; not of the spirit, but of the letter; for the spirit giveth life, but the letter killeth."

*Apostles.* "For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Gal. i. 12.

*Clergy.* "For I received it of man, and was taught it by man, and not by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

*Apostles.* "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." 2 Cor. iv. 7.

*Clergy.* "But we have this treasure in our notes, that the excellency without the power, may be of us, and not of God."

*Apostles.* "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matth. xxvii. 18, 19.

*Clergy.* "Go ye, therefore, into a town where there is no settled minister, and read piety and morality to all who come where

you are ; sprinkling their children in the room of circumcision, in the name of the trinity ; teaching them that the commands of Christ are not essential ; and lo, rich worldly men will be with you as long as you live."

*Apostles.* "The elders which are among you I exhort, who also am an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed : feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof ; not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind, neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples of the flock ; and when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory which fadeth not away." 1 Pet. v. 1, 2, 3, 4.

*Clergy.* "The reverend clergy who are with me I advise, who am also a clergyman, and a D. D. a member of that respectable body, who are numerous, and "who seek honor one of another," and a partaker of the benefit of it, feed yourselves upon the church and parish, over which we have settled you for life, and who are obliged to support you, whether they like you or not ; taking the command by constraint, for filthy lucre, not of a ready mind, as lords over men's souls, not as ensamples to them, and when commencement day shall appear, you shall receive some honorary title, which shall make you appear very respectable among the reverend clergy."

*Apostles.* "Then they that gladly received his word, were baptised." Acts ii. 41.

*Clergy.* “Then they that ignorantly owned the covenant, had their children sprinkled.”

*Apostles.* “And upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Matth. xvi. 18.

*Clergy.* “And upon a platform have we built our churches and the gates of heaven prevail against us.”

These with many other places of scripture I wrote in the same manner, and made several remarks on them, which were afterwards published, with the title of “*The clergyman’s looking-glass, or ancient and modern things contrasted.*” This was not published till after two others, though written first.

In the same summer, I preached in Northwood upon baptism, from Eph. iv. 5. “*One baptism.*” By request the discourse was printed, and was the first I ever published. In the discourse the seven following things were taken up. 1. That there is but one baptism, which is water baptism. 2. The author of that one baptism. 3. The subjects of it. 4. The mode. 5. The administrator. 6. The name in which it ought to be done. 7. The design of baptism. This book made no small stir among the sectarians.

At the time this book was written, it was not in my power to prepare it for the press. I could not tell where to place the capital letters, nor the points. This Mr. Peirce did, and by seeing him do it. I soon learnt so much as to prepare my books, so that people could

find my meaning, by reading the book after it was printed.

Such my reduced situation at that time as to property, that the only way left to get my book printed was to engage to pay the printers as soon as enough of the books were sold to amount to his price for doing them. Mr. Nathaniel Peirce engaged to print it so, and in that way received his demand. That summer I wrote by request of the "*Christian conference*," articles of faith and church building, which we then thought necessary to keep a church together, in addition to "*the perfect law of liberty*."

At a meeting of the "*Christian conference*," held in Stratham, in September of that year, these articles were read publicly, and highly approved of by the elders present. Dr. Samuel Shepard was appointed with me to examine and prepare them for the press. Our address came out in the pamphlet, with both our names as a committee, in which we declared them orthodox. This was a bold and important step at that time, for by these articles we condemned all others. The next step was to disown these, and hear Christ in all things.

In October, after this meeting, my friends in Portsmouth, obtained of the selectmen, a place over the market, called "*JEFFERSON-HALL*," to hold meetings in every Sunday, but not in the evening. It was a large and convenient place, and would contain not far from one thousand people. The people



made seats, a temporary pulpit, and in a short time it was ready to meet in. This was considered a great favor, to have so good a place. Soon after this, the people proposed bringing my family into Portsmouth, and they agreed to support them if they came. I was at that time considered a baptist, as nothing had been done publicly to lead the people to think otherwise. Some stated that I had no recommendations from Woburn, this was true, and they had never brought any thing against me, and the baptist deacon had declared in writing that my character stood fair with them.

In November, the people requested me to preach in "*Jefferson-Hall*," on the day of the annual state thanksgiving-day, as it is called. In the afternoon I spake upon the image of gold, silver, brass, iron and clay, and the stone which brake it in pieces, recorded in the second chapter of the book of Daniel. The compound image I considered the *Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman* kingdoms. The stone, the kingdom of the most high God, which will finally break all the others, and grind them to powder, so that the earth will finally be cleared of them, and the kingdom of righteousness fill the whole earth.

This subject led me speak of the cruelties peculiar to *monarchies*; and of the peculiar excellencies of a "*republican government*." This was the first time of my making a public declaration of my political principles.

That discourse, some of the principal men in Portsmouth heard, and after meeting requested me to deliver the discourse again in the same place. Accordingly a meeting was appointed in the hall a few evenings after.

There were so many men who wished to hear, that no children were allowed to go in, and but few women attended. The place was filled with men, chiefly republicans. Some of the monarchy men attended ; but could not relish what was set before them.

After this, by request, the discourse was written and printed, and has gone through three large editions, and is yet remembered to the pleasure or vexation of many.

### CHAPTER XXXIII.

On the 12th of December, 1802, my family came into Portsmouth, and I hired of Edward Call, an house in Bridge-street, at sixty dollars per year, to be paid quarterly. This we considered as the hand of God, who had thus provided us an house, though but a few months before we had not where to lay our heads, only as kind friends took us in. We had but little furniture, having left so much in different places, and were in other respects very poor. The thought of so much rent frequently troubled me, but the Lord always provided for us, and what the people collected for six months, was sufficient to support us, and I laid up besides, one hundred dollars,

which was designed for those who had demands against me.

Fourteen days after my removal to Portsmouth, the great fire broke out, which burnt the principal part of the town. This was a distressing day to many. Towards day of Dec. 26, I saw the woman fleeing from the house she had the summer before refused me a lodging in for one night. The house was entirely consumed, with much property it contained. The fire burnt the hall where we held our meetings; this at first greatly damped our spirits, as we could not tell where to meet. Through the months of January and February, we held our meetings in the north school-house.

From December to March, the brethren, five in number, held a meeting every Saturday evening, to examine our articles, that we might be prepared to form ourselves into a church according to the new-testament, and to be called christians, without any sectarian name added. So great was my desire to see such a church, that I thought a labor of twenty years would be a pleasure, if in the end I might see twenty united walking according to the new-testament. In the time of my preaching, from July to January, a few had professed to be converted to God. January 2d, for the first time, I baptised three, Samuel Woodbury, John E. Palmer, and Sally Loud. As this was a new thing, multitudes attended, and behaved as well as could be expected.

In months of December, January and February, I kept a singing school ; first in Mr. Pierce's room, and after it was burnt, in Mrs. Steward's house. This school proved a great blessing to many. It was my constant practice to pray with my scholars at the close of the school ; and generally to tell them of the importance of a part in Christ, that they might know how to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. God blessed the exhortations and prayers, to the awakening of the greater part of the school. The latter part of the time the minds of many in the school were so weighed down with a sense of their undone situation, that they would set and weep, without sounding one note. Some of them told me they could never attend the school again, until they found peace in their minds. The last evening we attended, there was such a weeping and sobing among the young men and young women, that they could not sing ; they all wept, and I wept with them. At eight o'clock, we all left the school and went where a number had gathered to hold a prayer meeting.

From this time, which was about the last of February, 1803, the good work increased gloriously among old and young. By the first of March, our Saturday evening meeting consisted of about ten. In a few days several more were baptised.

When our number was some short of twenty, we agreed to consider ourselves a church of Christ, owning him as our only Master,



Lord, and Lawgiver, and we agreed to consider ourselves christians, without the addition of any unscriptural name. One evening we agreed to write to the baptist churches in Brentwood Madbury, Berwick, and some other towns, to send their elders and chosen brethren to meet with us the third Wednesday in March, to see if they could give us fellowship as a church of Christ, according to the new-testament.

They came, and proposed to form a council, in order to constitute us a church according to the order of the baptists. I told Dr. Shepard there was no need of that; for we were already a church, whether they acknowledged us so or not. They all agreed to consider us a church of Christ in fellowship with them. They thought we were baptists, though we were called by another name. The ministers and brethren had a good meeting with us, and rejoiced in the work of the Lord. Our number that day was twenty-two, and an happier company, I believe, were never seen on earth since the days of the apostles.

The last of March, we obtained leave to hold our meetings in the court-house. This was a large and convenient place. The first Sunday in April, we had our first communion. The lawyers, seats were just enough to contain the members, who joined together to shew forth the Lord's death, in that command. As this was our first communion, many came to see and hear some new thing. This to me and many others was an heavenly

place in Christ Jesus. Many sat around weeping, while considering themselves as having neither part nor lot in this matter.

About this time, the enemies of the cross began to be alarmed and enraged. On Sunday evenings, there was some noise and disturbance around the house, and in the lower part. Several made a ridicule of baptism ; and at the time of baptising made considerable disturbance.

Sometime in April, on Sunday morning, I felt a strange operation on my mind, which was unaccountable to me. My mind was uncommonly solemn before the forenoon meeting began. The most I could tell was, that there was a great concern on my mind for those who were without hope, and without God in the world. In this situation I went to the court-house at the usual hour. A large number of people had collected, and appeared very solemn. After setting awhile on the judges seat, the situation of the people came on my mind, so that I could say with the prophet, "I am pressed as a cart with sheaves." At first I wept, then sobed, and at last cried aloud, being unable to refrain. I remained in that situation about half an hour ; and at the same time almost the whole assembly, old and young, were in tears ; and some cried out, being unable to conceal their distress. As soon as my mind was enough composed to speak, I told the people their dangerous situation was the cause of my trouble ; and spake to them about half an

hour from these words : "They that are whole need not the Physician ; but they that are sick." I have ever believed that this operation was by the spirit of God ; for more than fifty, whose minds were taken hold of by the truth of God that day, were afterwards brought to rejoice in the truth ; and they declared that their attention was first arrested that forenoon.

From this time the work went on gloriously, so that in about one year, the church consisted of about one hundred and fifty members. In this month, or the forepart of May, Mr. Baldwin came to see us, and preached in the court-house, and in Mr. Walton's meeting-house, to the general satisfaction of those who heard him. After his return, he told his brethren in Boston they must lay aside all their prejudices against me, as God was remarkably blessing my labors in the conversion of sinners from the errors of their ways. Such was the attention of the people to hear the word, that meetings were held every evening in the week, for some considerable time.

As there was much singing and praying, preaching and exhortations in the court-house, which stood but a few feet from Mr. Buckminster's meeting-house, some complained that our meeting disturbed theirs. And this was true, for so it had done from the first day of my preaching in the town. This stirred up a few to purchase a lot on which stood an house twenty-five feet wide, and about forty-five feet long. This they soon

turned into a convenient place for meetings ; by making a plain pulpit, pews, and a small gallery. The house would contain several hundreds. This raised the enmity of many against me, and the people who met there, as they were in doubt what it would grow to. Our meeting-house was stoned many times when full of people. The windows were frequently broken ; and three whole windows were once carried off in one night. At one time they threw a vial of assasaetida into the aisle, which broke as it fell upon the floor. The opposers fired guns around the house, made hidious noises, beat drums, played on fiddles and fifes, blew horns and whistles ; fastened our door when the house was full of people ; and came with a mob to take me out of the pulpit when preaching. I was often disturbed while baptising ; and once a man undertook to baptise another to shew his contempt of baptism.

For a long time I was a spectacle to those characters, and an object of ridicule while passing the streets. Some of every class, from children to men of grey hairs treated me with contempt, while passing peaceably along. I often received abusive language from people in the streets, and from the windows of houses, stores and work-shops ; but none of these things moved me from testifying to them that their works were evil, and that they were under the influence of blind guides.

Awful judgments were sent on several of those who opposed me and the work of God.



Several were taken out of the world in a sudden and awful manner. Some afterwards acknowledged their wickedness and found forgiveness.

In the winter and spring, I wrote and published in the Newhampshire Gazette, what was afterwards published in a pamphlet, entitled, "*The history of anti-christ.*" This sorely grieved the friends of *law religion*, and those who were attached to an *anti-republican government*. This was like fuel, which increased a fire already kindled ; as by this an attack was made upon their religion and politics ; and it was not long before the first book I had written was published, entitled : "*The clergyman's looking-glass, or ancient and modern things contrasted.*" This by many was considered almost blasphemy. After it was written, I read the manuscript to Dr. Sheparrrd, who highly approved of it ; but afterwards he was afraid it might bare too hard upon *us* also. Elder William Batcheldor also approved of it, and proposed a profitable correction in one place, which was published as he proposed. All these things, and preaching contrary to the popular doctrines of the day ; exposing the fashionable prayer books published by the clergy in Portsmouth and around, led many to say, as of Lot, " This one fellow came in to sojourn among us, and he must needs be judge." This was a trying day, though not an hair of my head ever fell to the ground through the malice of my enemies.

About this time the people in Salisbury called in a very unpleasant manner for the money they had given me in the house purchased some years before. According to what was told me, they made it a matter of speculation. I was told that they agreed to give a lawyer one half of what he could get of me, as they knew it was not possible to make a lawful demand of a present made me, which was secured by the law of the state.

They appointed a man of violence to attend to the business, by the name of ———. It was said that he told the lawyer to make short work of it. Of course I was complimented by Mr. Gerrish with a special writ, and one of three things must be done ; give the money ; get bonds for my appearance at court, or go to prison. I told the officer that I would go and live with him. He conducted with propriety, and advised me not to go to prison, as I had friends who would be bound for my appearance at court. This advice I accepted, and though I did not owe these people in Salisbury any thing, yet having once received their property, and they wishing their ——— gift back again, my determination was to return it if possible, because I coveted no man's silver, gold, apparel, *house or land*.

Before the time for my appearance at court, by some means, which I cannot now tell, I had two hundred dollars ready for them, which was what they demanded. One hundred I had saved the winter before, to

pay what was justly due to others. The other hundred, I believe my friends in Portsmouth collected. Two brethren, EDWARD CALL, and JOHN MARBLE, went to Salisbury, and carried the money. I gave them particular orders to give them all they demanded. They took, if my memory serves, ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-NINE DOLLARS from a poor man to gratify their avarice, or to feed their revenge. When the two brethren returned, they said, they should have brought back the money, if I had not directed them to leave it, as there was no law which could have taken the money from me for what they had given a deed of ; by which it was secured to me, my heirs, and assigns forever.

This was the most ungenerous and cruel treatment I had then ever received from any set of men whatever. This was not the doings of all who gave the house and land. Before they took the money from me I was very poor, and this distressed me *one hundred and forty-nine dollars* more, or about that sum. Their conduct was so cruel and unfeeling, that I shall not mention one of their names, but record the deed, without preserving their names in my record, which might hereafter be brought up as a reproach to their children, if not to their children's children.

Notwithstanding much pains was taken to make people in Portsmouth believe my character was low in Salisbury, these two brethren were able to contradict all these evil reports;

and they declared that the greatest difficulty there, was, that the people could not persuade me to make my abode with them.

In June, 1803, about the time of this difficulty, Elder Abner Jones, from Vermont, came to visit me, and was the first free man I had ever seen. He had gone beyond me in several parts of doctrine ; particularly as it respects the true light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. Before he came to Portsmouth, I had not learnt that God gave light to all men ; but when he declared it, and shewed that the scriptures declared the same, my mind was open to receive the declaration. Before he came, I considered myself almost alone in the world ; though the baptists thought I belonged to their faith and order. I was with them in body, having never separated from them by any public declaration ; and was then a member of what was called the *Christian conference*. My mind was *out*, and for about one year it was my determination, as soon as things were ripe, to declare myself free, and separate from the baptist denomination, and all other sectarians on earth.

Elder Jones took hold with me in the good work, and his preaching, praying, exhortations, and singing, was a great blessing to many. He was received among the free-will baptists, and ordained by them ; though he told them from the first, he was not a free-will baptist, but a christian. His coming greatly encouraged me to go on in the



cause of freedom. He attended several of the *Christian conferences*, but did not join it, till some time after, on account of the *articles* which we had drawn up; these he said were needless and hurtful. These articles the church at Portsmouth soon laid aside, and at Hopkinton, N. H. in the year 1805, the conference agreed they were useless, and that the new-testament was the only and all-sufficient rule for christians.

In the course of this summer, Elder Jones went with me to attend a meeting at the house of capt. Jeremiah Paul, in Kennebunk, thirty miles from Portsmouth. Elder William Bactheldor, of Berwick, attended with us, and manifested something which looked like a desire after liberty; though he afterwards went back, and became an hireling at Haverhill, Mass. where he remains to this day. Our meetings at that time were blest to many who heard, believed, and obeyed the gospel.

At the close of the first meeting in the afternoon, a respectable man, about fifty years old, came to me, before many were gone out, and said he wished to converse with me upon some points of doctrine, as he termed them. His request I readily complied with. He stated, that there were several doctrinal points which he wished to know if I held or believed. The following is as near as I now recollect: "Do you hold to original sin?" No sir, said, I because there is no such sin mentioned in the bible. "Do you hold to the fall of man?" No sir, because it is not men-

tioned in the bible ; but is the doctrine of the catechism. “ Do you hold to the covenant of grace ? ” No sir, for there is no such covenant mentioned in the bible. “ Do you believe in the trinity ? ” No sir, for the word is not in the bible, nor the doctrine. The whole bible declares, “ One God,” and his person one. “ Do you believe that God has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass ? ” No sir, for there is but one thing said to be foreordained in the bible, which is Jesus Christ ; and if God has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, he is worse than the devil, who has more disposition than power ; for if God foreordains whatsoever comes to pass, he must be the cause of all the wickedness he has forbidden in the scriptures, and which he declares he will punish the wicked for committing. Can you, sir, prove that such doctrines are in the bible ? Here, he paused, and said but little. After this conversation, he went out of the house. A man at the door, asked him how he succeeded. He paused awhile, and then said : “ I was never so perplexed in conversing before ; but I will tell you, *it is very hard to give up so much all at once.* ” Soon after this, he gave up so much of the doctrines of men, all at once, or gradually, and was determined to be a free man, hearing Christ in all things.

After our return from Kennebunk, Elder Jones preached a short time in Portsmouth. While there, several of the baptist brethren, hearing of the great revival of religion in Ports-

mouth, came to visit us. Among others was Asa Niles, who kept a stable in Boston. For the first time, he delivered an exhortation in our meeting-house. After this he thought himself called to preach, and was ordained by the baptists.

Several who came from Boston, requested Elder Jones to go and preach with them. He went, but the two baptist ministers were not hearty in receiving him, as he was considered a *free-willer*. Several who heard him in Portsmouth were so urgent for his preaching in the meeting-houses, that the ministers were afraid to deny their request. His preaching called the attention of many to the things which belonged to their peace, and in a few months, a glorious reformation took place, and many were converted to the Lord. The same summer I went to Boston, and though there were some differences between me and the church at Woburn, the two baptist ministers concluded, as the church at Woburn had brought nothing against me, they could with propriety ask me to preach in their meeting-houses.

Whenever a meeting was appointed for me, the houses would be full. Several times when I came, Dr. Stillman would have a new objection to my preaching in his pulpit. These objections I removed for some time, till at last he set up his *will* and determined I should preach there no more; as I did not believe in *calvinism*.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

At the time Elder Jones went to Boston, my mind was much exercised upon the conduct of the baptists in different parts of the country, and especially the baptist ministers in Boston. The eighteenth of July, 1803, while Elder Jones was there, I was meditating upon what is said in 1 Pet. iv. 17, "*For the times is come that judgment must begin at the house of God.*" My conclusion was, that *judgment* meant punishment inflicted on professors of religion for leaving their first love, and conforming to the world in their manner of worship and appearance. These thoughts I communicated in a letter to a brother in Boston, dated Portsmouth, July 18, 1803. In the letter it was stated, that sometimes the ministers of Christ would so conform to the world, as to wear anti-christian titles, surplices, bands ; use notes, be supported by law, and paid for praying. After mentioning this, was the following : " I leave it with you to judge, whether this is not in a great measure, the case with the baptist churches and ministers in Massachusetts, and particularly in Boston." This, and some other things, which exactly applied to the baptist ministers in Boston, greatly disturbed Mr. Baldwin, when he saw and read my letter, as he had occasion to think himself not only described, but meant in the letter.

My letter was written in sincerity, and not through ill will to any. Though it was



not directed to Mr. Baldwin, yet he wrote an answer to it, dated Boston, Aug. 2, 1803. He ridiculed me, and my letter. I had mentioned God's four sore judgments, recorded in Ezekiel; *sword, famine, pestilence and wild beasts*, without any design of applying them to any, to shew the meaning of the word *judgment*. When he wrote upon that he said, "As to the *wild beasts*, what you mean by them, I must leave for you to explain, for I am a little at a loss from your explanation. I conclude upon the whole, they don't wear surplices." My answer to him was this, "I have no doubt but some, whom Paul calls *evil beasts* have worn surplices, but I am far from thinking you such a one. I believe you to be a *child of God*, and a *minister* whom Jesus Christ has called and owned, but I believe you are gone into Babylon, and that they have altered your name, as Nebuchadnezzar did Daniel's, calling him Belteshazzar." The clergyman's looking-glass displeased him; and to render me, and the book contemptible, he wrote the following in his letter, "Were I skilled in making *looking-glasses*, I would try to give a glimpse of yourself in this passage." He then proceeded to give me a *glimpse* in the following words: "Is not this the language held up in the preceding paragraph? O poor Boston, how I pity thee; scorched under the divine judgments, and yet thou knowest it not! Not a drop of spiritual rain falls on thee, I mean, *particularly the baptist churches*, and the

cause is, their ministers are conformed to the world ! All this will be proved to demonstration, if you will look to Portsmouth, and see how it rains where I preach, who am, in all respects, free from conformity to the world."

All this ridicule and contempt I bore with patience, knowing no such thing had ever entered my mind, when the letter was written.

In the month of September, 1803, about two months after my letter was written, the Warren association was held at Randolph, near Boston. This I attended, though convinced that the association of churches was anti-christian. The year before, the association had decided : "*That God had foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, and published the same in their minutes.*"

This decision made no small stir ; and some of the churches wrote to the association, desiring an explanation of their decision. The association took up the subject, and appointed a committee to draw up something to satisfy the churches. Elders John Peak, William Batchelder, and some others, were chosen to write. When they retired, they invited me to go with them to their chamber. One of the committee opened the case, and each one spoke his mind upon the subject. When all had gone through, Mr. Peak wished me to give my mind upon the subject which I did, by relating the following circumstance :

“A nobleman in England once built a palace, and when it was done, one large stone was left near the corner of the building. There it remained for some time, to the injury of those who came around the corner of his palace. Some of his friends complained of the stone, which they had fallen over. He, to prevent this difficulty, ordered a post set by the side of it. This did not prevent people from falling on it in the night. He then hung a lamp by it at night, but some while looking at the lamp, would fall over the stone. All this increased the complaints of his friends. At last one man told him the best thing would be to remove the lamp and post, and then carry away the stone, which would prevent any difficulty from the stone. This he did, and no more injury was done by the stone.”

The application was easy ; remove the statement, “ *That God has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass,*” and here the dispute will end. The assembly of divines left the stone. Last year the association set up the *post* ; this year you are to hang the *lamp* ; but all this will not prevent people from stumbling at that stumbling stone. They were not at all pleased with my similitude, and here I left them to fix up their *lamp*.

In the evening after the association, I attended a meeting in Mr. Baldwin’s meeting-house, and spake upon Psalm xlv. 4, “ *Thine*

*arrows are sharp in the heart of the kings enemies, whereby the people fall under thee."*

The house was very full of people, and the Lord stood by me, and gave testimony to the word of his grace. More than fifty were afterwards converted to God, who first felt the king's arrows sharp in their hearts that evening.

In November, 1803, I preached for the first time in Bradford, Mass. at the house of John Marble, who had been at Portsmouth, and was afterwards baptised, and received a member there. The clergyman of the town, Mr. Allen, attended, but took no part with me, until supper time. Several people attended the meeting from Haverhill, about two miles distance. Among others, was Silas Plumer, and his son Frederick. At this meeting, his attention was arrested ; he was afterwards converted, baptised, and became a preacher of the everlasting gospel. This meeting was blest to many ; and not long after, a glorious reformation took place there, and in Haverhill, on the other side of the Merrimack river.

Not far from this time, one man in Portsmouth, who had been friendly to me, and zealous for my coming there, became displeased, as things did not turn as he had calculated. One day he sent a line, requesting me to meet him at his house at such an hour. We met accordingly ; he took me into the third loft, and told me to leave the town. I told him my belief was that the Lord had



called me to preach the gospel in Portsmouth ; that my work was not done ; and that I should not go for him, nor all the devils in hell, nor opposers on earth. He stated that he thought as he was the principal means of my coming, he had a right to send me away. As he was a man given to change, I left him, and never meddled much with him afterwards.

At this time, my situation was critical indeed, to all human appearance. My enemies in Portsmouth, were numerous and violent ; my friends were few, and the greater part young people. In Boston the baptists were displeased at my writings, and evil reports were in general circulation. My encouragement to persevere, was founded on the goodness of the cause, in which I had engaged. I was left almost alone in Portsmouth, as Elder Jones was wholly employed in preaching at Boston, though the ministers did not like his preaching.

The winter following the association at Randolph, was the most terrible time I had ever known, as it respected opposition from the baptist ministers in Boston, and others influenced by them. As this opposition laid a foundation for my final separation from the baptists, I here give the account from my journal of February, 1804, which was written down the days on which the things were done, recorded there.

Monday Feb. 2, 1804, set out from Portsmouth for Bosotn. Tarried with Deacon

Smiley, of Haverhill. Tuesday 3d, rode to Woburn ; Elder Pottle preached, and baptised eight persons. I spake in the evening from Gen. xlv. 4, "*I am Joseph your brother.*" Wednesday, Feb. 4, rode to Boston ; heard a clergyman preach in Mr. Baldwin's meeting-house. Thursday, Feb. 5, preached in the evening at Mr. Baldwin's meeting-house, from Psalm cx. 3, "*Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.*" Took up three particulars : 1. The day of Christ's power. 2. His people. 3. How they are willing. The discourse was not wholly pleasing to the calvinists, who believe Christ's enemies are his people. Mr. Baldwin prayed that God would bless the truth delivered, but I learnt afterwards that he did not believe all was truth he heard delivered.

Friday, Feb. 6. Preached in the vestry, from Prov. viii. 20, 21. Mr. Baldwin attended, and made the concluding prayer. Saturday evening, preached in the vestry, from Rev. i. 5, 6.

Sunday morning, Feb. 8. Preached at the vestry, at sun-rise, from 2 Sam. xxiii. 4. "*And he shall be as the light of the morning.*" After breakfast, rode to Malden, four miles, preached twice ; returned to Boston, and preached the fourth time in Mr. Baldwin's meeting-house, from John xvi. 8, "*And when he is come, he shall reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.*" It was thought that not far from three thousand people attended. Some, who believed

in the light of nature, and a good conscience in bad men, were not a little disturbed, to see their tradition upset by the scriptures of truth.

Monday, Feb. 9. Preached in the evening at the vestry. Tuesday, Feb. 10, preached in the evening at the same place. Wednesday, Feb. 11. After Deacon Wild had taken much pains to have me preach in Dr. Stillman's meeting-house, he consented and I went to see him. He said, "I hope you will not preach any thing to make a division." My reply was, the only knowing division I shall make, will be between *truth* and *error*; and if there is any division on my account, my opposers will make it; but I will not make any. I told him that some of his church were so opposed to me, that they would not give me their hand. I read him twelve pages of a discourse written upon being born again; this he approved of, and said he believed it would do good.

Thursday, Feb. 12. This day, I went to Roxbury, about three miles from Boston, to preach in the evening. As soon as it was dark, many people came together; and when the meeting began, the lewd fellows began to disturb. I spake upon Acts xx. 24, "*But none of these things move me.*" They threw half coppers at me; talked, groaned, prayed, and made much disturbance. After going through, I rode into Boston, with Mr. Edward Call, of Portsmouth, who conducted with wisdom and fortitude through the whole.

The mob followed us to the court-house, and being unable to overtake us, returned, and we arrived safe, and thankful that we escaped out of their hands.

Friday, Feb. 13. Preached in the vestry. Saturday, 14, preached in the vestry, from 1 Thes. ii. 4, 5, 6. Spake upon the nature of the gospel ; the extent of the proclamation, which was to every creature ; the sinner's condemnation in disobeying the gospel ; that evening, I told the people, that none were the elect, but saints. This had begun a fire before, which about this time appeared first among the ministers, and then among those who did not see for themselves.

Sunday, Feb. 15. Preached in the vestry, at sun-rise ; went to Malden, and heard Elder Jones preach, from Rev. v. 4. At noon Elder Pottle baptised four. I spake in the afternoon, from 1 John ii. 28. This day Mr. Baldwin, in the forenoon, delivered a discourse upon Rom. viii. 28. in which he described calvinistic election.

In the evening I preached at Henry Wendall's house, near Dr. Stillman's meeting-house. This was the first separate meeting we ever had in Boston, and was a little like the declaration of independence once made by the Americans. This greatly enraged the meeting-house people ; as several of their church members attended the meeting.

Monday, Feb. 16. This day there was no small stir about the meeting and the new doctrine. The cry in Boston was, great is



calvinism of Boston ! In the afternoon, Deacon Wild, a man of candor, and who had not consented with the council, came and asked me to preach my belief in full that evening, upon the gospel, decrees, election, &c. I went to the vestry that evening, to preach according to request. Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Bowles, who preached with the Dr. attended, that they might judge of my orthodoxy, or heterodoxy. My text was this : Acts xvii. 19, 20. " And they took him and brought him to Areopagus, saying, may we know what this new doctrine thou speakest is ? For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears, we would know therefore what these things mean."

I endeavored to prove every particular from plain declarations recorded in the bible. After I had done, Mr. Baldwin rose in opposition to what I said. He acknowledged the sinner's condemnation turned where I had said it did. He told the people a man might throw a number of scriptures together, and make out any thing he pleased, and, said he, "*this is the way we make out our different systems.*" This last sentence was altogether against himself. One of Dr. Stillman's church attempted to stop him from opposing what he believed was the truth ; but he went through, and I remained in silence, knowing he could not overthrow what had been delivered, unless he could overthrow the truth contained in the scriptures. After this, Deacon Wild asked each of them to pray ; but they were

both so far from the spirit of prayer, that they refused. Many thought Mr. Baldwin was angry, and I believe he thought they had occasion to think so.

Tuesday evening, Feb. 17. Preached at Henry Wendall's. Wednesday 18, heard Mr. Baldwin preach from Gal. v. 1. He told the people their salvation depended on the immutable purpose of God ; and before he closed, in his exhortation said, "Sinner will you cut off the only limb on which your salvation depends?"

After he had done speaking, Dr. Stillman arose, and with an air of importance, first told the people how happy he was in being so united with his brother Baldwin ; though they had been so divided in sentiment, that they once broke up a meeting. Next he undertook to extol calvinism. He told the people the land on which the meeting-house stood, was to remain theirs, so long as there were three calvinists ; though there was no such thing mentioned in the deed, which was afterwards proved to his face. He harangued upon sovereign grace ; and talked loudly of arminian doctrine ; and with a loud voice, said, it was free-will doctrine !

This day, Ebenezer L. Boyd met me and Elder Jones in Union-street, and with an air of self-importance, said, "I forbid you personally, from going into the vestry to preach, and wish you to keep at home ;" with many other things equally unchristian.

After this terrible uproar, I tarried in Boston several days, on account of a monthly church meeting which Dr. Stillman's church were to hold on Monday evening, 21st. One man, a member of that church, had joined with the church in Portsmouth; but walking disorderly, the church called him to an account; he then withdrew, and said he was a member of the church in Boston. I told the Doctor how he conducted; and he wished me to desire the church to write to him how the man behaved. The church sent a statement; and that evening the man was present. The man's testimony against me was received, and the testimony of about an hundred and thirty members against the man was rejected. He was considered a man of truth, and I and my brethren false witnesses, until sometime after the same man was obliged in the public paper, to own he had spoken falsely in another matter, and signed his name to the same.

From that evening, the glory departed from the first baptist church in Boston, and has never returned. For many years after, it was rare that they ever had a peaceable church meeting, and they turned each other out of the church, nor did they ever after prosper as before.

Sunday 29th. I preached in the baptist meeting-house in Haverhill, for the last time. On the way from Boston there, I told the stage driver, that Dr. Smith took notes of people for preaching, when they did not pay

him. This he heard of, and was so offended, that he would never let me preach there again. And though before that the house would be full when I preached, afterwards, for awhile, Silas Plumer was the only man I knew of there to receive me into his house.

Tuesday after, I returned home, and wrote in my journal the following : “ This is the most singular journey I ever performed ; but amidst all my persecution, I have found that the work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness, and assurance forever. Though many hard and false things are said of me ; in the presence of God I can say, I see no other way to preach and act, without doing wrong ; and if any person on earth will prove that my preaching or conduct is contrary to the new-testament, I am willing to turn ; but until I am convinced of being wrong, I am determined through Christ strengthening me, to persevere, come life or death. Amen.”

## CHAPTER XXXV.

The first week in March, 1804, I attended the *christian conference* in Epping, N. H. . As there were many evil reports in circulation respecting me, the conference thought it their duty to contradict them, and give me a writing, signed by Dr. Shepard, in behalf of the conference ; certifying that my character stood fair, to their certain knowledge. The



following is a copy of the writing, which was afterwards published in the Newhampshire Gazette :

*Recommendation given by Dr. Shepard, of Brentwood, to Elias Smith, of Portsmouth, March 8, 1804.*

This is to certify all christian people whom it may concern, that whereas Elder Elias Smith, preacher of the gospel, has had many scandalous stories, and evil reports spread abroad respecting his personal character : The members of a christian conference, held at Epping, March 8, 1804, consisting of a number of Elders and brethren, think it our duty for the honor of the general cause of truth, and for the support of the said Elias Smith's christian character, to inform all persons where he may be called to preach, that we are satisfied from our personal knowledge and good information, that said scandalous reports are not true ; but we view him a man of a godly life and conversation.

SAMUEL SHEPARD, in behalf of the conference.  
Epping, March 8, 1804.

In the Spring of 1804, a church was gathered in Boston, according to the new-testament, composed of members who had formerly belonged to the baptist churches, and those converts who had not joined the baptist churches. This was the second church in New-England, called *christians*. This year Elder Jones went to Nantasket, and preached. A goodly number were converted, and

another church was gathered there the same year, and another in Haverhill and Bradford.

This year the opposition to me ran so high, on account of what the two baptist ministers in Boston said against me, that I wrote Dr. Stillman a letter, dated Boston, May 2, 1804, stating the cruel and unjust manner he had conducted towards me. This highly offended him, as no one had ever brought such a complaint against him before. This was afterwards printed, as he refused to make that satisfaction which I thought was right.

Through all these things, I was considered a baptist, and a member of the Woburn church ; and though the church complained of me, yet they had never proved me guilty of unrighteousness. As I was frequently in Boston, people from different parts of the country heard me there, and often requested me to preach where they dwelt. That summer, a man by the name of Job Peirce, from Freetown, forty-five miles from Boston, attended meeting, and afterwards wrote requesting me to visit him and preach in that region. Knowing my circumstances, he wrote for me to come in the stage to Taunton at his expence, and he would meet me there. I appointed to meet him on the 16th of July, 1804 ; and he on that day sent his horse and carriage ; and that evening I preached in the meeting-house at the place called *Tissonnett*. A considerable number of people attended. In that journey, I preached in Middleborough, Freetown, and other places near. He ac-

accompanied me through the whole, and afterwards conveyed me to Taunton, and furnished me with money to go on to Portsmouth in the stage.

That summer, the baptists seemed determined if possible, to crush me, or prevent my preaching at all. The latter part of August, the church at Woburn endeavored to bring certain charges against me, which they said in their letter to me would not admit of positive proof. From all I could gather, Mr. Baldwin wrote the pretended indictment. This he never denied. One of the deacons said to me, "I never saw him write it, and I shall not say any more." They directed me to meet the church the 10th day of September, 1804, and closed with the following words: "Should you either neglect or refuse to come, we shall feel ourselves called upon to proceed against you as a disorderly walker." By order of the church, Joseph W. Beers, church clerk."

This letter I received, Sept. 4, 1804, and concluded the time had come for me to declare myself, not of that order of people; but free from all sectarians on earth. The conduct of Martin Luther, taught me a good lesson. Pope Leo X. told him, if he did not renounce his errors, and return to the church by such a day, he should be excommunicated. The day before this, Luther erected a scaffold in Rome, and in presence of thousands declared, that he then publicly withdrew from the church of Rome, and was no

longer a member of that community. This prevented his ever being excommunicated. My conclusion was to withdraw, this I told them by a letter in which I stated my reasons for withdrawing, in the following words :

“ I wish you to understand, that I do not consider myself a member with you, nor have I for about two years. As I was voluntary in joining with you, having fellowship with you, so I let you know by this, that I am as voluntary in withdrawing from you for the want of fellowship. My reasons for withdrawing from you, are these : 1. The unchristian treatment I have received from several of your members. 2. The unchristian treatment I have received from the church. 3. Because I do not believe the doctrines contained in your articles, or confession of faith. 4. Because I do not believe the name you are called by is scriptural ; nor your holding to the association of churches, which is an anti-christian combination.

These are the principal reasons for my withdrawing from you. I wish you not to give yourselves any further trouble concerning your dealing with me, for I am not a member with you. From henceforth let no man trouble me ; for I am determined through the Lord's help, to oppose every thing which I believe is wrong, and to contend for what I believe is right. If you wish to know what denomination I belong to, I tell you, as a professor of religion, I am a *christian* ; as a preacher, a minister of Christ ; calling no



man father or master ; holding as abominable in the sight of God, every thing highly esteemed among men ; such as *calvinism, arminianism, freewillism, universalism, reverence, parsons, chaplains, doctors of divinity, clergy, bands, surplices, notes, creeds, covenants, platforms*, with the *spirit of slander*, which those who hold to these things, are too often in possession of."

After writing the letter, I told some of my friends, it was my determination never to join another sectarian church again ; this determination still remains with me. There has not been a moment since, when I wished myself back to that place from whence I came out. And did others know the advantages of being free from the commandments and doctrines of men, thousands would by willing, be free, and enjoy the glorious liberty of the children of God. I never wished to be at liberty to do wrong, but to do right.

The day appointed by the Woburn church for me to meet them, a part of the members voted to withdraw the hand of fellowship from me, because I had withdrawn from them first, and for no other cause, as their committee afterwards acknowledged before three witnesses. That month, the association met in Boston, and there the association were informed by the Woburn letter, that they had withdrawn the hand of fellowship from me, but never gave the reason ; this they were ashamed to do. When the minutes were printed, the editor, Mr. Baldwin, if I was

rightly informed, had the following inserted in page 4. "The following note was communicated to the association in the letter from Woburn." "*This day, Sept. 10, 1804, voted, to withdraw the hand of fellowship from Elias Smith.*"

As they gave no reason why they withdrew the hand from me, I thought it a duty to give the public the reasons in a pamphlet that year. The reasons were *seven unscriptural things* they held which I denied.

1. Their name *baptists*, which is unscriptural. One man was called a baptist, but no churches.

2. *Articles*, which are an addition to the perfect law of liberty; these they held and I disowned them.

3. *Association of churches*, which is contrary to the new-testament, and anti-christian.

4. Holding to the necessity of a college education to be ministers of the gospel. This is contrary to the new-testament.

5. The baptists held to *missionary societies*, which is nothing more or less than the old *Jesuit's plan*, invented first by a monk.

6. The baptists hold to *councils* to ordain ministers, and settle disputes. These are unscriptural.

7. They hold to *installing*, or *re-installing* ministers, a practice not once intimated in any part of the bible.

These are the reasons I gave the public, why they withdrew the hand of fellowship from me, and these they have acknowledged

were the reasons, by their long silence of about *twelve years*.

About the time my seven reasons for leaving the baptists came out, Dr. Shepard had appointed to ordain Eliphalet Merrill of Northwood. They sent for me and others to attend and assist in ordaining him, as Dr. Shepard had not heard of my withdrawing from the baptists. The Doctor, on the way from Brentwood to Northwood, saw the book, and was greatly agitated to find a man had told the world that the baptists, were unscriptural in *seven things* ! He came on to Northwood, and appeared almost distracted. He put up at Increase Batchelder's with me, the night before the ordination. He talked severely to me, and said I had thrown every thing away, and was drowned in the ocean of christianity ; and that according to my plan, the Pope was as good a christian as any body ; and that I had turned against my brethren, who had looked upon me as a poor unfortunate brother, and had tried to help me out of difficulty.

He also stated that when I came from Salisbury to Epping, in the year 1802, he expected I should be a *colleague*, and be *under him*, and that now he knew not what to do concerning the ordination. All this I bore in silence, meaning it should be the last. The next morning, the Doctor, and those under him, contrived a plan to turn me out of the council, without having it known to me, or any but the *caucus*. They

held a private council in the barn, before the public council was appointed, and there agreed to shut out all the ministers they had sent for, that they might shut me out. In the public council, according to what was agreed on in the barn, as I was told, they appointed for me to pray first ; Elder John Crocket to preach after the prayer ; and my brother, Uriah Smith, to pray after the sermon. The ordaining prayer to be made by Dr. Shepard, while he and his deacons laid on their hands. The Doctor was also to give the charge and right hand of fellowship.

All this being agreed on, we went to the meeting-house ; and it is easy to judge how *awkward* we all appeared in the pulpit ; having been requested to assist in ordaining an Elder, and when there, looking to see the Doctor performing, as though we were learning how to act at another time. The people *stared* and *wondered* ! But no one durst ask the meaning of such unheard of conduct.

A clergyman of modern time would be ashamed of such conduct, and would I believe, despise and disown one who should treat one of his brethren in such an hypocritical manner. Notwithstanding the Doctor could not tell me I had left the baptists, nor let me assist in ordaining the Elder, yet after we came out of the house where the council met, he desired me to baptise a man who wished to join his church, as he was too unwell to baptise him, and the man was not will-



ing to be baptised by any excepting the Doctor or me. This I refused to do, as I knew the Doctor wished me to baptise him, because he was afraid of injuring his health by doing it himself.

There had been no one thing for three years, that sunk my spirits like this. The hypocrisy I discovered, and the cruel spirit I saw among the leaders of the baptists, led me to mourn, to think what that once flourishing people had come to; and what it would grow to in the end. I returned home, thankful to God to find a company of sincere brethren, who considered Christ their all.

Not far from this time, Mr. Buckminster, and Mr. Humphreys of Portsmouth, wrote against me. Their books I answered, and they answered not again. Dr. Osgood wrote a ridiculous piece against baptism, in 1804; this I answered in a book entitled, "*The clergyman's looking-glass, No. 4.*" This the baptists were pleased with, as it described their baptism, and they had not then wholly separated me from their company.

Mr. Baldwin's famous sermon entitled, "The eternal purpose of God the foundation of effectual calling," came out this year. This book I answered in a pamphlet of 36 pages, entitled, "A man in the smoke, and a friend endeavoring to help him out." He never made any public reply to it; for my printer said he was a man of too much sense, either to undertake a second vindi-

cation of his own book, or to attempt an overthrow of what was said against it.

This year, in June, my attention was called to think of the real state of the wicked after the last judgment. Before this time, I had taken for truth the old pagan doctrine of "*eternal misery*" for the wicked. In June, 1804, being in Mr. Holmes' book-store, in Boston, I asked him if he had any new publications. He handed me "*Evan's Sketch.*" On opening the book, my eyes first fixed on the word, "*destructionists.*" I read one page, and concluded, people who held the wicked would be destroyed, were in a strange error, as no such thing ever before entered my mind. I bought the book. Often after that the destruction of the wicked would pass through my mind, though I supposed eternal misery was recorded in the bible. In April, 1805, I concluded one day to take my bible and concordance, and find eternal misery, and not have my mind any longer troubled about *destruction*. I examined the words *misery*, *miserable*, and *miserably*; and found there was not one place in the bible, where the word was used to describe the state of man beyond death. Next I looked for the word *torment*, and found that was limited, and that there was no torment mentioned beyond the day of judgment. I then looked at the words *destroy*, *destruction*, *death*, *second death*, *perish*, *consumed*, *perdition*, *burnt up*, *end*, &c. I examined the similitudes used to describe the end of the wicked, such as *chaff* and

*stubble* burnt up ; *dry trees* cast into the fire, and *tares burnt* ; the fat of lambs consumed, *whirlwinds*, a *dream*, and *noise*. All these things proved to me that at the last *judgment*, the wicked would be punished with everlasting destruction, which would be their end.

My mind was settled upon the subject ; but concluded to keep my discovery to myself ; as the people were almost distracted with having so many new things ; such as that God was *one* and not three, and that all rules but the bible were useless, and that salvation was free for all.

My first preaching and writing, disturbed the *clergy* and the wicked ; the next disturbed the baptists, and I was about certain, if this was known, it would disturb my brethren with whom I was connected. I kept it back as long as duty would suffer me, and was constrained at last to make it known, or preach no more. It made some stir, but people bore it as well as could be expected. Soon after preaching it ; I wrote and published five sermons upon the subject, which have never been answered to this day.

Though the doctrine was then new, yet it has since spread, into almost every part of the United States, and in Vermont it has been the means of bringing many from *universalism* and *deism* to Christ for life. In the years of 1804 and 1805, I was constantly employed either in writing, travelling, or preaching ; and it now seems almost a miracle, that an individual should endure so much

labor. It was a common thing for me to preach from eight to fifteen times in each week, and to ride from one to two hundred miles. My friends and enemies kept me constantly employed. Many times I wrote till towards day, and commonly slept about six hours out of twenty-four.

There were four churches; these I visited often, and frequently met with much opposition, while endeavoring to obey my master's orders. But the Lord stood by me, so that the gospel was fully known. In this time the reformation continued in Portsmouth, and great numbers were turned to the Lord.

On the 2d day of June this year, an advertisement appeared in the N. H. Gazette, which set almost the whole city in an uproar. The advertisement mentioned a pamphlet for sale, describing in miniature, an episcopalian priest, without any name. The book was printed by John Whitelock. It was supposed I was the author, though I had not seen the book. The printer had his office taken from him by the men who owned it, and soon after he was put in jail by the episcopalian clergyman of Portsmouth.

I was out of town on Monday and came in on Wednesday evening, and had not heard of the tumult, until almost home. In the evening as I went to the meeting-house, a large number of riotous people had gathered around the house, who were very noisy.

Observing the tumult, I thought it best to return home without attending the meeting.



As I went into my house, a friend handed me a letter, which he found in my yard, directed to me. The contents of it was this : That I had insulted the whole town, and that the writer thought the devil would not let me alone, until I had done something to bring me to punishment ; which he supposed I had now done by publishing the above named pamphlet. That there was a rod in pickle for me, and that if I did not leave the town, I should have a good hiding. He mentioned that a little *tar* and *feathers* well applied, would be of service to me, &c.

It was signed,

HOMO.

That evening the people in the meeting-house were some disturbed, by riotous persons around the house Thursday, June 4, was the most trying day I had ever witnessed. In the forenoon, I went to the barber's shop in Daniel-street ; after being shaved, about 11 o'clock, I went down Paved-street to the Printing-Office, in Mr. William Simes' building. A few minutes after, one of the journeymen said, there was a man below who wished to see me. Finding who it was, I thought it prudent not to go down. Soon, another said there were nearly forty men in the store below, and that the office was surrounded to keep me in.

Each one may judge of my feelings at that time. My determination was to stand firm, come what would. Mr. Benjamin Hill, who occupied the store below, brought up an axe and set it within the door, and went down

again. Some of the mob were for going up into the office ; but Mr. Hill, as I was informed, stood upon the stairs, and told them it was death for any man to go up without my leave. In this time I sent for the sheriffs and my friends, to come immediately to my relief. After some time, Mr. Hill consented that two men might go into the office, with my consent, if they would give their word to offer me no abuse. This they agreed to, and went up.

Mr. John Melcher, Thomas Treadwell, and Henry Bufford, who were friends to me, went up with them, fearing what they might do. They shewed me the pamphlet, and asked me if I was the author. From what I told them, they appeared satisfied that some other person had written the book.

During this time, some of the mob went into the store of Messrs. H. and B. Penhallow, and enquired for whips, without telling them what they wanted of them. The whips were taken down, and they agreed to call and pay for them if wanted. These two men were much displeased, when they found why they enquired for whips, as they were opposed to such kind of conduct.

Before the mob had dispersed, people were gathering from every part of the town to rescue me from the difficulty the rioters placed me in. After the two men went down, whose names I now conceal, as they have learnt better since, I went out of the office with my two friends, Thomas Treadwell and Henry

Bufford, who walked on each side of me to my house, in the sight of those who threatened to whip me, as soon as I came out of the office.

The tumult did not end here. In the evening, several hundreds gathered around the meeting-house, determined if possible to take me out. At meeting-time my friends came to my house, and surrounded me, and so walked to the meeting-house, and into the pulpit; leaving the aisle full to the door. Here they stood while I was preaching from these words, "*Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.*" The noise of the mob around the house was so great, that many times my voice could not be distinguished from others. After preaching, my friends moved out of the gallery, and lower part of the house with me, so that as soon as I was in the street, I was surrounded nearly twenty deep, with men and women, who told me not to fear, as they would take the blows first. They drove the mob before them, and so went with me to my house, and watched it through the night; so that no man set on me to hurt at that time.

The evening of the 4th of March before; the evening after Mr. Jefferson took the presidential chair, as chief magistrate of the United States, I delivered a political, religious discourse, which was afterwards printed, and entitled, "*The whole world governed by a Jew.*" This greatly enraged the law religion people, and it was thought had some

effect on the political affairs in the State of Newhampshire ; for that day the republican governor, (John Langdon, Esq.) took the command, to the great grief of the *tories*.

That evening, after I left the house, one of the principal men in the town, came up to the meeting-house, and addressed the mob in an excellent manner. He told them it was a poor sample of their conduct, under a republican government. He ordered them to disperse.

The selectmen conducted with zeal, and honor. They ordered the constables and police officers to attend and prevent disturbance around the house. The members of the church, male and female, were willing to lay down their lives for me. This is but a short account of an affair which will ever remain a blot on the characters of those who were leaders in the tumult.

After the author of the pamphlet was known, he, the printer, and woman, who first told the story about the episcopalian priest, were all prosecuted for defamation of character ; though he would never let the matter come to trial. The priest settled it, paid the costs, as I was told, and quit the town and country.

This year, 1805, I commenced the publication of a work entitled, "*The christian's magazine, reviewer, and religious intelligencer ; containing subjects, historical, doctrinal, experimental, practical and poetical.*" This was published once in three months for



two years. Reviewing so many of the popular sermons of the day, greatly enraged the *clergy* and their subjects.

This year I became acquainted with the *free-will baptists*; and found many good, faithful and spiritual preachers, and brethren among them. But for one man, I should have become a member with them, so far as to be held in fellowship as a fellow-laborer; but that man objected, on account of my believing the wicked would be destroyed. His opposition at that time, lessened his influence among his brethren, and he has been losing ground from that day.

Soon after the tumult in Portsmouth, I visited the people again in Freetown, Longplain and Newport, R. I. My good friend, *Job Pierce*, of Freetown, received me heartily, and went with me to Newport, and several other places in that region. In that journey I attended a meeting at a place called the *Furnace*, in Freetown. The meeting was appointed at nine o'clock in the morning, and was attended in an orchard, as no house there would hold the people. That morning, Elder *Daniel Hix*, who lived in Dartmouth, several miles off, came, and several of his brethren, to see and hear what this new doctrine could mean. Soon after he entered the house where I was, he thus addressed me: "Well brother Smith, I and my brethren have come several miles this morning to hear you. Some of my brethren, thought on the way, that perhaps you would

not preach if we came ; but I told them you could not help preaching ; for we were so hungry that the Lord would not let us return without food."

He further added, "I have read several of your books, and from them I concluded you wished to revolutionise the world. At first I thought you would not succeed, but on the whole, I do not know but you will do it ; for young people are fond of new things ; and the old people will soon drop off ; and but few will be left to oppose.

"I will now tell you brother Smith, as I told the methodists ; they might make me and my brethren all methodists if they could. 'They tell me you wish all to be *christians* ; make us all christians if you can, I am willing for that.' We had an heavenly meeting together, and not long after that, he and all his brethren concluded to be christians, and followers of the Lamb, leaving their *sectarian name* behind.

From Freetown I went in company with Job Pierce to Newport, to see Elder Eddy, a baptist preacher, who lived there. We arrived at his house on Saturday afternoon. He received us kindly, and in the evening, we went to see Caleb Green, another baptist preacher. After sitting a few minutes, Mr. Green, in a *cold, stiff* manner addressed me to this amount : "Mr. Smith, I should be glad to have you preach in my meeting-house, *but*, there is some difficulty at Woburn, and they have withdrawn from you, and you have

left the baptists, &c." Soon after this, Elder Eddy said, let us return, I am not afraid to let you preach in my meeting-house; I am a free man, and do not belong to any association, and am not afraid of offending any of them. Mr. Green's treatment was so mean and unbecoming even a gentleman, that it made me feel very disagreeable, as I knew he had never been very highly esteemed by the Warren association.

We spent the evening in an agreeable manner, with Elder Eddy and his family.

After we retired to sleep, I dreamed, that the place before Elder Eddy's house, called "*Washington square*," was appointed to spread a table to feast all the poor of the town; and that after the feast, I was to preach the gospel to them. I dreamed that the table extended from one end of the square to the other; that Elder Eddy stood with me at the west end of the square, which ran down to a point; that a plank was placed across the square just above us, and that near us was a *short fat little hog*, that could talk; who told me, in an insolent manner, that I should not preach to those poor people. After the poor people had done eating; while preparing to preach, the little hog said, he was determined to prevent my preaching to them. I thought in my dream, that I had a sword in my hand; the point of which I put to his neck, and began to crowd him with it, and pushed him till he fell over the plank, on his back; which set him a kicking at

both ends, while he kept repeating ; "you shall not preach, you shall not preach." After this I dreamed of preaching to the poor, without any interruption from the little hog.

When I awoke, the application of my dream was easy. And from that day to this, I have considered Caleb Green, where he can do no more than *kick*, and say, you shall not preach. He has tried since that to injure me ; but has never prevented me from preaching the gospel to the poor, and inviting them to a feast of fat things.

We enjoyed a blessing in the meetings at Newport, and on Monday returned to Free-town. The third day of July, 1805, I preached at a meeting-house in Middleborough, to a very large and solemn assembly. Dr. Hathaway, who had been a deist, attended several meetings before this, and felt his unbelief shaken. At this meeting, he viewed himself undone without a Saviour. The next morning, I went to his house, and found him walking in his parlor, and saying, "I am undone."

That day he sat out to visit a sick person in Berkley, and on the plain, was so weighed down with a sense of his situation, that he stopped his horse, kneeled down by the wall in the road, and prayed the Lord to have mercy on him. He found peace in his mind, visited the sick, administered medicine, recommended Christ, prayed with the sick person and returned home an happy man. He was soon after baptised, and to



this day has walked in newness of life, rejoicing in hope of blest immortality.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

In November of this year, I travelled into different parts of the district of Maine, and attended the free-will baptists' yearly meeting in Gorham, and formed an agreeable acquaintance with many brethren in that region. In January, I attended the free-will quarterly meeting in Gilmantown, N. H. From there I went to New-Durham, and visited Elder Benjamin Randall.

After travelling and preaching three weeks in that region, I returned home the last of January, 1806. In my absence, a letter from Woodstock, Vt. was sent, which informed me that an old man, his daughter, and her husband, were determined to be free from the sectarian names, doctrines and laws, and wished me to come and visit them, and preach the perfect law of liberty. This looked like a small beginning ; but knowing that the kingdom of heaven in its beginning, was like a grain of mustard seed, I felt encouraged to go.

At this time, almost all the baptist ministers had left me, or were disaffected at the new doctrine, I had preached, as they called it. Elder Jones was some hurt respecting the end of the wicked ; and the conference, I concluded to attend no more, as they seem-

ed in general inclined to continue baptists, though they had agreed to leave all not found in the new-testament. With all these things in view, myself poor, hated, despised, and disowned by those who had highly esteemed me, my mind was not a little tried. However, believing I was engaged in the cause of truth, which was great and would prevail; the Wednesday after my return from New-Durham, I set out for Woodstock, to visit the *three* who sent for me.

I arrived there the next Saturday evening; and the next day found a considerable number of *baptists* and *methodists* who were determined to be free. I tarried and preached there about six weeks; and in that time about thirty-six united together as christians, owning Chirst their only Lord, Master, and Lawgiver. There was some opposition, and much union. In this visit, I gave up *close communion*, which I had held till then. It was hard work to give it up, having believed it so long.

The first communion we had after the church was gathered according to the new-testament, a considerable number of *congregationalists*, and *methodists*, with some *baptists*, communed with us. Here close communion, an invention of men, left me; nor have I ever been troubled with it since. In the month of March, I left the brethren happy, and united in the truth, walking in love. From this small beginning in the year 1806, in the state of Vermont, the cause of Christ,

and christian liberty has spread into almost every part of the state, in a greater or less degree. There are a great number of churches, and preachers, who now live in love and peace, and the God of love and peace is with them.

While at Woodstock, I became considerably acquainted with the nature of the methodist hierarchy, as contained in the different editions of their discipline. After my return, I wrote, and published, a review of the methodist discipline ; in which it was proved that their doctrine was unscriptural, as it respected *God* and *Christ* ; and that their government was contrary to gospel liberty. This made a great stir, till people were convinced of the truth of what was written. On account of many questions asked me concerning the new-testament, and what was required of christians, for the help of others, I wrote a book entitled, “ *The age of enquiry, christian’s pocket companion, and daily assistant.*”

At the time I was in Woodstock, brother *John Rand* and Elder *Ephraim Stinchfield* preached in Chebacco, a parish in Ipswich, Mass. A great reformation took place, and a church was gathered there according to the new-testament. Elder *John Rand* preached there for several years after.

In the spring of 1806, there were six churches without articles, or an anti-christian name. One in Portsmouth ; one in Bradford and Haverhill ; one in Boston ; one in

Nantasket ; one in Chebacco, and one in Woodstock, Vt. This I considered, and now believe was the Lord's doings, and was marvellous in our eyes. My enemies thought when Dr. Shepard and others left me, all would come to nothing ; but at this time, they were afraid their joy would be but for a moment.

In June, I attended the free-will baptist yearly meeting at New-Durham, N. H. The meeting was held on the day of the total eclipse, and was the most solemn and awful time I ever before witnessed. At this meeting the news of my father's death was brought to me. On reading the account, I felt as if all was gone, for several hours. Every barrier between me and death was removed. He was sixty-nine years old when he died ; and was very happy and reconciled to death, having hope of the resurrection of the just.

This year, I published a piece entitled, "*A short sermon to the calvinistic baptists in Massachusetts ;*" from these words : 1 Samuel, xxvi. 19, 20. "Now, therefore, I pray thee, let my Lord the king hear the words of thy servant. If the Lord have *stirred* thee up against me, let him accept an offering ; but if they be the children of men, cursed be they before the Lord ; for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, go, serve other gods. Now, therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth before the face of the Lord ; for the king of Israel is come out to



seek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains."

The occasion of writing and publishing the sermon was this : after publishing my reasons for withdrawing from the baptists, several of the leaders, used their influence to stir up the people against me, in different parts of the country. The following was contained in the sermon, which the baptist ministers and people never have denied to this day :

"Those who have in particular been *stirred* up against me, are the baptist churches in Boston, Charlestown, Woburn, Reading, Haverhill, Exeter and Brentwood. The men who have been the principal actors in stirring them up, are *Samuel Stillman* and *Thomas Baldwin*, baptist ministers in Boston. The two baptist ministers in Boston have conducted in the same manner towards me, that the Jews did towards the Apostles. After they had expelled me out of their vestry and meeting-house coast ; I went to Charlestown, where many heard the word in the town-hall ; but these two men, by their words or conduct, stirred up the people, with the minister, and the baser sort against me, so that the rabble without, made noises, beat drums, blew horns, and threw stones at the house where we were met for worship. When some of the brethren reproved them for their conduct, they justified themselves by saying, I had no business to preach there, for, said they, "*Dr. Stillman and Mr. Baldwin do not approve of him.*"

In Salem they stirred up the people, and when I went there, a certain woman, a member of the baptist church, treated me with neglect, for this reason, said she to me, "*I do not think a man can be right that Dr. Stillman and Mr. Baldwin do not approve of.*" In Reading, I met with the same treatment; I asked a friend the meaning; he said, "*that they were ruled by Mr. Baldwin,*" or words to that amount.

When I went to Beverly, where the people before this were so desirous to hear, that they would come out of their houses, as I passed along, to urge me to preach, all were cold and indifferent. When I asked the reason of it, the answer was, "*Dr. Stillman and Mr. Baldwin are against you, and it will not do to ask you to preach.*" When I came to Haverhill, where hundreds used to hear, there was but one man in the town that I knew of, to receive me into his house. The reason given was, that "*Mr. Baldwin had wrote on to them that it would not do.*"

A brother from Brentwood told me that Mr. Baldwin wrote on to Dr. Shepard, and stirred him up against me. He said he knew one sentence in the letter, and that was all he heard. These are the words; "*that Mr. Smith and Mr. Jones had scattered a great deal of free-will stuff in Boston.*"

A brother in Haverhill, told me, that when Mr. Baldwin was in Ipswich, he stirred up the people there, and told them that if Smith

and Jones came there, he should not, or to that amount."

When Mr. Baldwin preached in Free-town, where I had preached, some of the people told me that his sermon was so pointed, that they knew he meant me, as much as though he had called me by name. Many were much dissatisfied with his conduct in this matter ;" and I believe he never preached there again.

In the midst of all the reproaches, poverty, and persecutions I then endured, with the loss of almost all my old friends and brethren ; this place of scripture was a constant support and comfort to me : "*Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word. Your brethren that hated you ; that cast you out for my names sake, said, let the Lord be glorified ; but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.*" Isa. lxvi. 5. I have lived to see the accomplishment of this word of the Lord. My heart has been filled with joy to see the spread of the gospel, the increase of converts, and free churches from Nova-Scotia to Georgia ; and into Canada, west to the Holland purchase, and on to the Mississippi river, and beyond. Through this extent of country, the principles preached in Portsmouth, in 1802, have spread, and in this year, (1816,) is spreading beyond what was ever before known.

I have no doubt that those who treated me with such injustice, are now ashamed ; and could I do justice, and feel clear, in omitting

their names and deeds, I would cast a veil over the whole ; but duty requires that these things should be brought to light, that the present and future generations may see the hand of God, in preserving and prospering an individual from harm, in the midst of such a torrent of opposition, which poured in from almost every direction.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

In the year 1806, I published proposals for printing an illustration of the prophecies yet to be fulfilled ; a subject which I had been studying for about ten years. In March, 1807, I began to write what had been proposed to be published. The subject was great, glorious, and extensive. I wrote three weeks ; and in that time had about one half done of what was proposed.

The particulars written were so glorious, that my mind was at times overpowered by the things I wrote upon, and my conclusion was, to drop the business awhile, and journey to preach the everlasting gospel to the children of men. Just at this time, I received a letter from Elder Daniel Hix, of Dartmouth, Mass. informing me, that he and the church, excepting about four, which consisted of more than four hundred members, had agreed to leave the baptist order, and to stand as christians only, without any other name ; owning Christ as their only Lawgiver. He



requested me to come and help them, and preach the gospel in that region. This news gave me great joy, and encouraged me in the midst of the opposition I then endured from the calvinistic baptists. Elder Hix, and the church he belonged with, were considered free-will, open communion baptists, and belonged to what was called the Groton conference, in Connecticut ; which differed but little from an association, excepting in the name. This conference held a correspondence with the Warren association, and were in fellowship with the ministers and members ; though the same ministers had no correspondence, nor fellowship with the free-will baptists in New-Hampshire and the the district of Maine.

The account of this separation from the baptists was published in my magazine, and caused great joy to the christian brethren ; and struck a damp on my opposers. Elder Hix told me that one man told him, that in leaving the baptists, and joining with Smith, he had done more hurt than in all his life before. Elder Hix asked him how he had done it. Why, said he, if you had let Smith alone, he would have soon come to nothing ; but now you have joined with him, he will never run out, for all your acquaintance think you are a good man.

In the last of March, soon after receiving Elder Hix's letter, I set out for Freetown and Dartmouth, and took with me a young brother, by the name of Frederick Plumer,

from Haverhill, who had an acceptable gift in prayer and exhortation. We went first to Freetown, (Assonet,) and from there to Dartmouth. The attention of the people there to hear the word was great, and an awful solemnity rested on the people while hearing the word. After preaching, I came down from the pulpit, and stood before it; a young person came to me in tears, and said pray for me, for I want salvation. A large number of young people gathered around, and when I kneeled down to pray, towards one hundred kneeled down around me, who felt their need of a Saviour. A glorious revival of religion took place there, and spread in various directions.

From Dartmouth, we went to New-Bedford, about eight miles from there. Brother Obed Kempton, of New-Bedford, with his wife, met us about three miles from there; where we attended a meeting on Saturday afternoon, and after meeting they accompanied us to their house. Sunday morning I met a few people at the house of Mr. Sherman, and spake to them in the forenoon. At noon, the people heard of my preaching there, and proposed to have the meeting held at William Roach's rope-walk in the afternoon. At the hour appointed the people came from all parts of the town to hear. It might be said with propriety, "Almost the whole city came together to hear the word of the Lord." The word proved a blessing to many who heard. In the evening, we attended a meet-

ing at Obed Kempton's house. The people filled the house, and those who could not get in stood around to hear. A glorious reformation took place there and in Fair-Haven, across the river.

In a short time after the reformation began on both sides of the river, opposition sprung up also. The sectarians began to whisper around the Salisbury and Woburn matters, and to intimate that my character was bad in other places, though no such thing was talked publicly. After some time, I told the people publicly, that the stories in circulation were false, and that they were told, that I might leave the town. I also related the following circumstance to them. "A certain old bachelor went one winter to visit his cousin, who appeared at first glad to see him. After he had stayed two weeks, he and his family grew tired of him ; and agreed one night, that the next morning they would appear very quarrelsome among themselves, that the old cousin might leave the house.

This he perceived in the morning, and after breakfast, thus addressed his relative : "cousin, I have been with you a *fortnight*, and you have been very peaceable, and just as I was going away, you are all in a quarrel ; and I have concluded to stay a fortnight longer, if you are not good humored before."

I also told them they had an opportunity to prove their reports, as I should tarry to give them an opportunity to prove me a bad man, or themselves liars ; and that when bad things were said or done to



the apostles, they tarried the longer ; and it was my determination to follow their example, of whom it was said, Acts xiv. 2, 3, " But the unbelieving Jews *stirred up* the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren. Long time therefore abode they, speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace." I also told the people if they wished us gone, they must behave well while we were among them. From that evening, evil reports had but little effect on the minds of the people, and the opposers of the work concluded their strength was to set still.

After preaching awhile in New-Bedford, I went to a place called Long-plain, eight miles from Bedford, at a meeting-house where Elder Hix preached half the time. A large number of people attended. I spake upon these words, Acts xxvi. 16, " For I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister, and a witness," &c. I told the people there were five sorts of ministers in the world. 1. Those whom the Lord made. 2. Those whom the devil made. 3. Those whom men made. 4. Those who made themselves ; and 5. Those who were never made at all. When the fifth class of ministers were mentioned, an old presbyterian deacon who came to hear, took his hat and left the house, fearing as I supposed, that a description of ministers not made at all, would be a description of the man of his choice.



In this meeting, Elder Hix told the people he was convinced that the Lord had called me to preach, as he had found converts in the places where I had preached. This struck a death blow to my enemies, as his recommendation had considerable weight on the minds of the people who heard his testimony. From this place I returned to Portsmouth, preaching the gospel in the towns between Freetown and Newhampshire.

The "GROTON CONFERENCE," was to be holden that year, at the Longplain meeting-house, in June. This I calculated by all means to attend, as the ministers calculated to call Elder Hix to an account, for leaving them, and joining with Smith, as they termed it.

The conference was held on the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth of June, 1807. As there was a great revival of religion in that region, several brethren went with me to the meeting. The ministers who composed the conference, knew beforehand what Elder Hix and the church had done, and of course came in a very unhappy temper of mind. They considered me the cause of the great overturn in that region, though truth was the real cause. On Wednesday, at ten o'clock, the ministers and delegates, with a large number of people met in the meeting-house. Elder William Northrop tried to preach first. He was much embarrassed, and acknowledged afterwards, that he forgot a part of what he meant to have communicated. He was told that his hard-

ness against Smith was the reason he could not preach.

These great ministers left the house about the middle of the day, and returned at two o'clock. All their wheels moved hard and slow each day. In the intermission of the second day, the conference were greatly disturbed with Smith, whom they considered the cause of all their difficulty. Elder Hix told them that nine tenths of the people wished Elias Smith to preach in the afternoon, and that if they opposed it, they would be disesteemed by the people in general. This they cared but little about. Some of them objected, saying Smith held damnable doctrines. One of them said he did not suppose Smith ever believed the bible. Mr. Ebenezer Nelson, from Reading, said, I was then under admonition. This same man was at that time under admonition of the church in Middleborough, and had been for several years, for wrong conduct, which he had been too stubborn to confess. The ministers were so enraged at me, that they foamed out their shame in my hearing, while walking across the room where they were talking.

The day was uncommonly wet, as the rain fell very fast. After the ministers had done their conference business, and preaching, Elder Hix told the people that brother Smith would preach in fifteen minutes from that time. As soon as the great ministers heard that, they took their hats and great coats, and went immediately out of the house into the

rain. They acted like mad men, more than messengers of peace ; and they put me in mind of the sons of Sceva, who fled out of the house, naked and wounded. Their conduct was the most ridiculous I ever saw among men professing to be ministers of Christ.

On the whole, I do not remember of ever seeing a company of ministers who set out to be *masters*, more chagrined. The brethren as a body had rejected the conference, association, and missionary plans, and were free, and the ministers knew it ; and saw no prospect of their ever returning back to the old baptist order. The meeting closed in peace, and we parted in love ; notwithstanding all the rage against one who has ever wished them well in well-doing.

From the spring of 1807, to November, I spent the greater part of the time in New-Bedford, and the towns around ; and was constantly employed in preaching, writing and baptising. In that time, over four hundred were baptised by different preachers in that region. In Assonet, where I first visited, Elder Philip Hathaway, who had been a baptist, was remarkably blest among the people after he determined to live a free man. Many were converted there whom he baptised.

That summer, a man by the name of Ellis, in Rochester, the town joining New-Bedford, requested me to preach at his house. The people there were much opposed to me, and threatened to raise a mob to carry me out, if

I attempted to preach there. However, a meeting was appointed, and I attended at the house, in company with Elder J. Plumer. As soon as we came in sight of the house, we observed a very large number of men standing around the house, which led us to think they had come with a design to make disturbance. When we came up to the house, the whole was explained. There were so many who wished to hear the word, that only the women could get into the house.

The man made seats before the house for the men ; took out his windows, and I stood in the door to speak ; so that all in the house and around it could hear. There were more people brought to a sense of their need of a Saviour in this meeting than I had ever before known. Many were pricked in the heart, and said in tears, " what shall we do to be saved." After meeting, it was difficult getting from them, as they surrounded the carriage ; taking us by the hand, and saying, " pray for us." Within six weeks from that day, over seventy gave an evidence of being converted to God, and were baptised according to the command of Christ.

That summer, I went by request to *Little-Compton*, a town on the sea-coast, in the east part of the state of Rhode-Island. In this town they had an hopkintonian preacher, and a good free-will baptist preacher, by the name of Peckham. He and his brethren received me heartily, and invited me to preach in the meeting-house, and their dwelling-



houses. While at Little-Compton, Isaac Willer, Esq. who was then a member of congress, proposed to me to conduct a religious newspaper, that should give a description of that religious liberty that is in harmony with civil liberty. He stated that people in this country had a better understanding of *civil* than *religious* liberty ; and he thought that a work of this kind would be very useful to the people of the United States.

The next winter, he, while at congress, sent to me a proposal of the publication before-mentioned, and the plan contemplated by him and other members. The plan was liberal, and several of my particular friends thought, as I was poor, this would afford me some help, while benefiting others. So it appeared to me at first ; but after mature deliberation, I concluded the plan though liberal, would not do for me.

I had endured the loss of property and friends, with much persecution, to obtain my freedom. I thought that to undertake a work of this kind, under the direction of others would confine me. They might wish some things published, which I should not like ; and I might wish to publish some things disagreeable to them ; and therefore concluded to undertake it at my own risk. Their liberality I acknowledged in a letter sent to Washington, and soon after, issued proposals for printing the "*The Herald of Gospel Liberty*," and published the first number in September 1, 1808.

This year, I visited Chebacco several times in the course of six months, and met with abuse from the enemies of truth. A great number were converted to God in that parish that year, which greatly disturbed the *law-religion* people; and they aimed their vengeance at me, as the supposed cause of what they called disturbance. Once they took the nuts off that held up the thorough braces of my carriage. Once they cut one of them almost off, intending to let me down; and once they took off my carriage wheel in the night, and hung it up on the mast head of a vessel, which lay about half a mile from where my carriage stood. My friends took it down the next day, and though it had been *hung*, it went very well the next day.

Sometime before this, I went to Hampton-falls to preach and baptise. On that occasion I was led to speak upon baptism in particular. Several of the infant-sprinkling people attended. I told the people there was but one place in the bible that had any reference to infant baptism to my knowledge, and I was not certain that infant baptism was meant there; though it was my mind it was. This drew the attention of the whole assembly, for no one there had ever read of it in the bible. I told them that when John was on the Isle of Patmos, he saw a beast rise out of the earth, having horns like a lamb, and he caused all, both small and great to receive a *mark* in their right hand, or in their *forehead*; and that mark I supposed was *infant sprinkling*;

and on that account, they put the water on the child's *face* instead of his *feet*. This made a great stir among many ; but the house was so full of people, that they were obliged to stay and hear the conclusion of the whole matter.

In this year, 1807, the clergy in Massachusetts, and Newhampshire in particular, were greatly disturbed, on account of my *writing* and *preaching*. In Portsmouth and the towns around, a considerable number of them were dismissed, and came up like trees plucked up by the roots. In my magazine, I wrote an history of the clergy from the third century, down to the year 1807. This greatly disturbed the chemarims ; [the black coated priests, Zeph. i, 4.] who were not at all pleased to see the history of their *order* for *fifteen hundred years*.

At a certain time, when in Boston, a clergyman, who had been reading the clergyman's looking-glass, thus addressed me : " Mr. Smith, you are too severe with the clergy in your writings." Sir I am not, for they are a set of useless men in Massachusetts, crowded upon the people without their consent ; and the people support them out of necessity, and not from choice. He replied, " I deny the charge, and require you to prove it." This sir, I am ready to do. Supposing, sir, a number of merchants had a cargo of *bad rum*, which cost them fifty cents per gallon, which is all their property, and will not sell. The consequence of this is, they must be reduced to poverty, and come upon their friends.

for a living. Supposing, sir, that their friends, to help them, and save their money; being influential in the court, should carry in a petition, praying that every town, parish, &c. should purchase so much of the *bad rum*, as to include the whole cargo, when equally divided among the people of the commonwealth; or pay a fine not exceeding one hundred cents, nor less than thirty, to be given to the men who owned the *rum*; would not this be crowding the *rum* upon the people; and taking money from them by *force* and *injustice*? “Yes, said he, but this does not apply to the *clergy*.” This, sir, is the case now in Massachusetts. In the year 1800, a law was passed in Massachusetts, requiring every town, parish, precinct, district, and other bodies politic, or religious societies, to have constant preaching; and if any town, &c. should be without preaching any *three months* out of six, they should pay a fine for the first offence, of a sum not exceeding *sixty dollars*, nor less than *thirty*, and for every offence after, not more than *one hundred dollars*, nor less than *sixty*. The design of this law is, that the people shall buy the *preachers*, or have money enough taken from them by the court, to support the men they do not want.

After hearing this, he observed that he did not know there was such a law in force. He never asked for any more proof, and so the matter ended at that time.



In this place, I take occasion to speak of the christian conference, which about this time disappeared. Some of the preachers went to the Meredith association, and in behalf of the others, told them they did not mean to leave the association. One of them joined the Warren association contrary to what he had agreed, and not long after, was disowned by them; and now lives a private life. Another returned to calvinism. One of them told me he should be glad to be as free as Elder Jones and I were; but, said he, I have a large family, and do not know how they would be supported. [At that time he and another received their support from the town.] My reply to him was this: "It is much easier to trust the town than to trust the Lord; for he will not support one minister unless he is a laborer; and your town is willing to support *two lazy ministers*." So we ended the matter. All excepting my brother and one or two more, forsook me and fled.

Having this year, seen the glorious work of God in the south part of Massachusetts, and the increase of churches, and brethren in various parts of the country, in November, 1807, I returned home to write the remainder of the sermons on the prophecies, and publish the same to the world. I wrote twenty-two sermons, beginning with the Jews in Egypt, and at Mount Sinai; noticed the new covenant that will be made with them hereafter; the prophecies which speak of their re-

turn ; described the land of Canaan ; the coming of Christ to reign on the earth one thousand years ; described his kingdom at that time ; the city and house that should be built in the thousand years ; noticed the gathering of all nations at Jerusalem, in the thousand years of Christ's reign on earth ; described the meaning of satan's being loosed for a little season ; the last judgment and destruction of the wicked ; gave a description of the new heavens and earth, which should appear after the first is destroyed, with the glory of the new Jerusalem ; closed the whole with a description of the kingdom Christ would in the end give up, and that in which he would reign forever.

If ever any mortal enjoyed an earnest of future glory on earth, I believe that enjoyment was mine while writing the twenty-two sermons on the prophecies. In March, 1808, they were printed, and scattered in various directions, among my brethren, friends and enemies.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

In this year, 1808, my friends increased, and in many places my enemies were confounded, while they saw how many were converted to God in almost every place where my brethren travelled with me to preach the gospel. In 1807, and 1808, there was the greatest reformation in Portsmouth that had ever been. At one time I preached six even-

ings in each week, for twelve weeks, excepting two or three evenings I was out of the town.

One thing took place, which I think proper to mention here. Many good people were greatly straitened in their own minds while they considered me in great errors, and yet blest of God, in the conversion of sinners from the errors of their ways. Some would say, "It is true the man is blest in preaching; but God does not bless his errors." Some considered me deranged, or "cracked brained," as they termed it. At that time, it was a strange thing for a man to profess religion, and be neither a *churchman*, *presbyterian*, *congregationalist*, *baptist*, *methodist*, *quaker*, nor *universalist*. To be only a *christian* and *minister of Christ*, without any name of the beast, which is 666, was a new thing to people in general. The sound of this was heard afar off, and in Philadelphia, one of the printers published me under the character of the "EXCLUSIVE CHRISTIAN."

A religious woman in Vermont, among the many, was much troubled, especially after reading the five sermons on the end of the wicked. While her mind was much exercised upon these things, she dreamed one night that an angel came to her, and she asked him what time it was with the church. He said, go with me, and I will tell you. She immediately followed him, and they soon came to an high wall. He shewed her a small hole through the wall, and told her

that was *faith*, and she must go through it. With difficulty she got through the wall, and found herself in a most beautiful garden, full of flowers and fruit. He ordered her to take a seat under the shadow of a tree, gave her a book to read, told her, when she understood that, he would answer her question, and then left her. When she had read it through he returned ; but she told him she did not understand it ; he left her again, and she read it through again, without understanding it. He returned again, and told her she must read till she understood what the book meant.

The third time she read it through, the meaning was plain to her understanding. He then told her to look up. She obeyed, and saw a *star* over her head. He said, "Do you see that star." Yes. "That *star*," said he, is one of the ministers of Christ, risen to shine in this gospel day." While she continued looking at the *star*, and wondering that it should be so easily seen in the day time, she soon after saw another *star* advancing towards the first. Soon after she saw several *stars* gathering from different directions, apparently at war with the first *star* she saw. These stars appeared to come against the *star* with violence, and then withdraw ; while the first *star* she saw remained unmoved amidst all this opposition. After awhile the first *star* moved slowly towards the *south west* ; soon one of the other *stars* moved with it, and after awhile she



saw them all moving on together in one direction, as if in the greatest harmony, and shining as they moved.

The woman asked the angel in her dream what these *stars* meant. He replied, "the other *stars* are also ministers of Christ, and as they appeared to fight the first *star* you saw, so these ministers will fight that one ; but he will remain unmoved amidst all their opposition, knowing he shall prosper. As you saw first one, and at last the whole go with him ; so these ministers of Christ will not only cease their opposition, but will unite with him, and so the gospel will have a glorious spread in the world." This I tell as a dream, and as it was told me by a person who had it from the one who had the dream, as near as my memory serves. There are three kinds of dreams mentioned in the scriptures. 1. Vain ones. 2. Such as come through the multitude of business. 3. Such as are by the spirit of God. Whenever I see the truth of a dream, I am bound to believe it ; and what a person says when awake, is not to be credited, unless we have proof of the truth of what he says.

The truth of this dream I have seen, and do see. Many who in the year 1808, were opposed to the doctrine advanced, have now not only ceased to oppose, but are actually fellow-laborers, and since that time, the simple gospel of Christ, without the commandments and doctrines of men has spread into the *south* and *west*, much more than in any

other direction ; and to a much greater degree, than was ever before known.

One law religion man, about that time, said to me, " Smith, you are like the devil, *walking* to and fro upon the earth." My reply was this, " No sir, I am one of those mentioned in Daniel xii. 4, that should *run* to and fro, to increase knowledge. The devil and his children, *walk*, but the Lords servants *run*, and by this means the devil and his servants are *always behind*."

In the spring of 1808, by the request of several republicans, I delivered a discourse in our meeting-house, upon LIBERTY and government, which was afterwards published in the Herald of Gospel Liberty, to the grief of the friends of monarchy religion.

On the first day of September, 1808, the first number of the Herald was published in Portsmouth, N. H. which, perhaps, was the first religious newspaper ever published. Only two hundred and seventy-four subscribers were obtained. In Sept. 1815, they had increased to fifteen hundred.

In the first number, notice was given that on the seventh day of the month, Peter Young, of York, eight miles from Portsmouth, was to be ordained. This meeting I attended, and spake from these words : Matth. x. 16, " Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves ; be ye, therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." When I came to contrast man-made ministers, with the ministers of Christ, as *wolves* in the

midst of sheep, instead of *sheep* in the midst of *wolves*, and shew that they were as wise as *doves* and harmless as *serpents*, it made a cracking among the wooden fences. The parish priest people were so enraged at me, that they threw down the wall, made noises, and caused much disturbance among the people. After meeting, two men attempted to upset my carriage while passing by them ; but driving very fast, caused them to break their hold, and so I escaped out of their hands, and arrived safe in Portsmouth, without receiving any injury from them.

That week, a general meeting of the christian Elders and brethren was appointed at Hampton, fifteen miles south of Portsmouth, on the common. Some of the *parish religion* people were determined to prevent the design of the meeting. Several of the people came with their guns, to drive the ministers and people from the common. Seeing the rioters determined to disturb them ; the Elders, John Rand, and Frederick Plumer, told the people the meeting would be held in a field at some distance, which the owner had given them leave to meet in. All who came to hear, went immediately to the place appointed, and united in prayer and praise to God.

As soon as the rioters found the people had gone to the field, they followed them ; and when they were opposite of the field, they begun with hooting, firing guns, &c. After proceeding a few rods, they marched back, and began their pow wow ; firing their guns

again. The man who had engaged the field, forbid any person coming in to make disturbance. Just after passing the assembly, they broke their ranks, and rushed into that and the adjoining field, firing their guns, throwing *potatoes* and dirt at the preachers, and upset the place where they stood to preach, while they were in it; one of them was struck with a gun; one of the preachers was pulled from his seat, after he had left his first seat. It was supposed that more than one hundred guns were fired; and that the rioters were fifty or sixty in number. Several of them in age, resembled the "*silver greys*" of———. When they were asked the occasion of such violence, they answered, that they were peaceable people, and meant to defend their *religion* and their *minister*. Knowing that the main vengeance was aimed at me, I thought it duty to retire, soon after they entered the field.

The other Elders and people, left the field in about one hour after the rioters came in to disturb. Soon after this, they came up to the house where I was, and stood before it. My horse was harnessed at the back door, and I went down the back stairs, out at the back side of the house; got into my carriage with a brother, and rode away before they knew I was gone; glad to escape through the back door; and through the good hand of God upon me, arrived safe at Portsmouth. Notwithstanding all the tumult, no one was injured in the least; though some had their clothes



scorched with the powder. The leaders were prosecuted and found rioters ; our brethren settled it with them on merciful terms, and they ever after let our meetings be attended undisturbed. About fifteen months after, I went and preached within a few rods of the field, from these words : Deut. xxxiii. 29, " Happy art thou, O Israel ; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord ; the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency ! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places." This was a glorious and heavenly meeting ; as several who attended were enemies to God, at the time we were so abused ; and before this meeting they became friends through Christ, by whom they were made nigh unto God.

In November of 1808, I first heard of a people in Pennsylvania, Virginia, Kentucky, and other places at the South and West, who considered themselves christians, without the addition of any sectarian name. This greatly revived my mind, as before that I did not know that there were any such people on earth, excepting in the New-England states. The Herald, by different means, was carried into different parts of the United States, and in consequence of this, in a few years, I became acquainted with *christians* in almost every state in the union. At this time, God raised up several young men to preach the gospel, and some from the free-will baptists, and other denominations, came and united with us, to spread the name of Christ only.

In this year, I travelled as far east as Wiscasset, and the towns around, and found a great door open to preach a free gospel. Many believed, and rejoiced in the hope of immortality.

When I first began to publish my thoughts in books, the printers and booksellers, were willing to print and sell them; but at this time, many were afraid to print them, or keep them in their stores. Two men agreed to print and sell whatever I brought them; but when I proved their denomination and doctrine unscriptural, they fell from their agreement; and sent my books away from their store, which was a great damage to me, and disgrace to them. Being treated in this manner, I went to Mr. Henry Ranlet, of Exeter, and told him how I was treated, by the printers, and booksellers; and wished to know if he was a man of courage. He observed that printing and bookselling was the business he followed for a living; that he would print any thing I brought him, and that he was not accountable, where the author's name was known. The greater part of my printing from that day, to this, has been done in that office.

In the year 1809, I was forty years old, and on that day, delivered a discourse, from Deut. viii. 4, "And thou shalt remember all the way the Lord thy God led thee, these forty years in the wilderness." When young, I often heard of people forty years old; such, I then supposed were old people; but when that time came, old age was still at a distance.

as all others have said before me. In the month of June, the principal people in the county of Bristol, Mass. requested me to deliver a discourse on *Taunton Green*, the fourth of July ; the anniversary of the "American independence." This request I complied with, and delivered a sermon, from Psalm cvii. 43, "Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord."

Two particulars were taken up :

I. *The THINGS for the wise to observe.*

II. *The loving kindness of the Lord, which the wise shall understand, by observing these things.*

Eight THINGS were noticed for the wise to observe :

1. *The tyrannical power, we as a nation were once under.*
2. *The stand this nation made against it, by a declaration of our independence from that power.*
3. *The victory which was obtained over that cruel and unjust power.*
4. *The government which was adopted by the Americans, after being delivered from a foreign despotic yoke.*
5. *The privileges enjoyed under the government of their own choice.*
6. *The attempts made to overthrow the government of this country.*
7. *Those attempts defeated.*
8. *The present state of our country, under a republican government, as it respects civil and religious liberty.*

This sermon was afterwards printed, and entitled ; “ *The loving kindness of God displayed in the triumph of republicanism in the United States.* ” It went through two large editions, and is not yet forgotten by its friends or enemies.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

In November of this year, 1809, I attended the free-will baptist yearly meeting in Gorham, Maine, and on my way home, proposed to preach one evening in Portland, Maine. The meeting was appointed at the house of William Waterhouse. A considerable number attended, and the next day, several wished me to tarry and preach in the evening. More came than the evening before ; and many pressed me hard to tarry and preach the next Sunday in the assembly-room. Seeing the attention of the people, I stayed ; met a large assembly, preached three times, and was, I supposed, ready to depart on the morrow. The next day, they urged me to stay another week. This I did, and found the word took great hold of the minds of many. After staying two Sundays, I returned to Portsmouth, sixty miles ; stayed one week, and returned and preached there seven weeks before I returned to Portsmouth again. In this time, five, who had been baptised in Portsmouth, came together, and agreed to consider themselves a church, according to



the new-testament. One young man by the name of Enoch Hazeltine, was converted and baptised during my stay of seven weeks, and soon after several more. The attention was so great, and the call for preaching there, so urgent, that the people earnestly requested me to carry my family there, if it was only for a short time. Having lived in Portsmouth seven years, and two months, and thinking some other person might do more good there, I consented to go, and in February, 1810, carried my family, and the little all I had to Portland. I then had five children. We had three born in Portsmouth ; one of which died, when two years old.

The day I carried my family from Portsmouth, I went from home, and laid a foundation for such trouble, as to that day we had been unacquainted with. While in Portsmouth, I had paid nearly all my old debts, and had gained some property besides ; and had for seven years been kindly dealt with by the Lord, and the people in Portsmouth, who had ever been ready to communicate to our needs. The people in Portland were agreeable, and kind, and my friends there and around, soon became numerous ; but I had gone from home, and never felt at home until I returned to Portsmouth, in December, 1814.

In the spring, several of my friends in Portland, proposed to let me have money to purchase a printing-office, to do my own printing. I purchased one at Exeter, and

hired a young man to do my work ; but not to my advantage. They meant it for good, but it proved a source of vexation till I got rid of it. In the summer of 1810, I travelled to Sandy river, in Maine, and in various other parts, preaching the glorious gospel to thousands.

This summer, Elder Frederick Plumer, who had the summer and winter before, been in Virginia, Pennsylvania, and New-York, came to see me, and wished me to visit Philadelphia. To that time, I had never been out of the New-England states. In November, I concluded to go on as far as Philadelphia, and on the second of December, sat out from Portland. I preached in different towns as far as Westerly, R. I. On the twenty-seventh of December, 1810, I arrived at Philadelphia, and was kindly received by John Hunter, Esq. While there, I wrote matter for my paper, and sent it by mail to Portland. I tarried in Philadelphia, till March 18, 1811.

While there, John Hunter, and others, wished me to make my stand there, as it was a central part of the United States, and a place where a correspondence might be opened to all parts of the country, and the free gospel spread in every direction. Had I been able to prosecute such a plan, it might have done well ; but my capital was not sufficient for such an undertaking. This I knew when it was too late. From the en-

couragement received, and the prospect before me, I agreed to return in six weeks.

From Philadelphia to New-York, I went in the stage, with Timothy Pickering, a very singular man. From New-York, went down the sound to Newport, R. I. and from thence to Portland in the stage, and arrived there the seventh day at night, and was kindly received by my friends in that place.

As it is my intention, to publish another volume, in a future day, beginning from the time of leaving Portsmouth in February, 1810, if my life and health is spared, I shall now only give the outlines of my travels, preaching and sufferings from that time till January 1, 1816.

In the last of April, 1811, I sat out from Portland, in company with Elder John Gray, for Philadelphia, to be there by the time appointed when I left the city. We made but little stop, until we came to Westerly, R. I. Here we tarried certain days. It so happened that the Elders of the Groton conference, that had been so enraged with me a few years before, had at that time appointed a meeting in Westerly to shew the extent of their opposition. Before this, they had tried to set Elder Hix against me, and wished only for him to *hate me*, and then they were ready to love him.

This council was held, May 15, 1811. About one year before, in the same town, the conference had cast out Elder Hix, and erased his name from their minutes, for holding

fellowship with Elias Smith, whom they termed an *excommunicated member*, though they never undertook to prove that it was so. The particulars of this affair will be given in the next volume.

From Westerly we proceeded on our journey to Philadelphia. In July my printing-office was brought on, and the eleventh day of August, 1811, my family came on by water. I hired an house in Christian-street, and gave two hundred dollars per year for it. In a short time after my family came on, I began to find the difference between the expence of a family in New-England and Philadelphia. The greatest part of my property was in the hands of others, and before three months, I saw times when my money was all gone, and I knew not where to get more. The people where I preached did but little for me, and all I could get with my work, was but little. My family was discontented and unhappy ; but the only way left us, was to bear it, and earn what we could.

In October after, I appointed to attend a general meeting in Caroline county, Virginia, and sat out in a carriage with Elder Joseph Thomas, who agreed to carry me there. When within about twenty miles of Baltimore, his horse failed, and stopped at the foot of a sand hill. We waited about an hour under the shadow of a priscimmon tree for him to recruit, and proceeded on slowly. In about one mile we came to a



river, which we were obliged to ride through. The water was about three feet deep. When in the middle of the river, the horse stopped, and would go no farther. Elder Thomas stepped into the river, and led his horse to the shore. I then took my trunk on my shoulder, sat out on foot, and walked about half a mile to a tavern; and a man with an empty hack carried me to Baltimore that day, for one dollar and fifty cents. The next day I went to Alexandria in the stage, and there hired an horse at one dollar per day, rode to Chilesburg, about eighty miles, and put up with George Phillips, Esq. father-in-law to William Guirey.

From there I rode with William Guirey to the place where the meeting was appointed; and met several christian preachers; preached eight times from Friday afternoon till Monday forenoon, to many who attended. The other preachers spake about as many times. This was an heavenly place in Christ Jesus. After the meeting I returned to Alexandria, having been gone ten days; and from there returned to Philadelphia in the stage, preached there and in the towns around till the next spring.

In February, 1812, I began to write my new-testament dictionary, having obtained a considerable number of subscribers for the same. In March, I had only fifty pages written. About this time my printers began upon it, and I wrote for them constantly for about five months, and in August it was all

printed. This was the most difficult piece I ever undertook to write. Eleven hundred and eight words were written upon ; and generally the subject given with the word, besides the meaning of the word used to express the subject. I wrote and published the Herald at the same time. With all this labor, and preaching several times in each week, I was much reduced, and at last almost unfitted for business.

In June, the christian brethren in Shanandoah county, Virginia, about one hundred miles west of Washington City, wrote, requesting me to visit them in August, to preach the gospel among them. In that month, as soon as my dictionary was done, I sat out, and having my meetings all appointed, rode in the stage to Washington, and from there on an horse. I was gone from Philadelphia, twenty-four days, in which time I rode six hundred miles ; preached twenty eight times, and returned home. While in Shanandoah, I saw in the Herald, a general meeting notified in Woodstock the last of September, which was a few weeks from that time. This meeting I had agreed to attend, and was then seven hundred miles from Woodstock. I tarried in Philadelphia ten days, and sat out with an horse and carriage for New-England. I was nine days on my passage from Philadelphia to Providence.

The tenth day, Saturday, rode to Bristol ; preached there on Sunday ; Monday rode to

Providence ; Tuesday on towards Woodstock ; Friday arrived at Windsor, with the horse I rode from Virginia. Saturday morning rode to Woodstock court-house, and arrived there ten minutes before the time appointed for the meeting to begin. After spending some time in Vermont, New-Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Rhode-Island ; I left my horse and carriage at Westerly, R. I. took the stage at New-London, Conn. on Saturday morning. Sunday morning ate my breakfast in New-York. Monday rode from there to Philadelphia, and arrived at nine o'clock, December 4, 1812. From August to December, I had rode about two thousand miles, and preached often through the whole tour. Through all this, the Lord preserved me, continued my health, and blest my feeble endeavors to spread the knowledge of his glory in the world.

From January, 1813, to April, I had continued scenes of trouble to pass through. My eldest daughter, and wife were both sick, one or the other, through the winter. I found my property was considerably gone, and that I owed about two thousand dollars, and saw but little prospect of paying soon. The man who at first appeared my friend, turned against me. Him I owed eight hundred and forty-four dollars. He called for his pay ; another man gave his note, and bought my printing-office, and then gave me a lease of it for two years ; and for the use of it, paid him the



interest of the money, till the lease was out, and then he took it.

In April of that year, I concluded the only way left for me to do was, to go on to New-England, and collect what I could that was due me there. My wife concluded to go on with me; but I was so reduced, that the only way we got on to Westerly, to my horse and carriage, was this: Some friends in Bristol, R. I. hired fifty dollars, and sent it on, and this I paid afterwards. In four months, we travelled to almost all the places where we had ever been, from the time we were married till we went to Philadelphia. In August my wife returned home, with Elder Plumer, and I tarried, not having accomplished my business so as to be able to return.

My friends gave me between three and four hundred dollars, to help me out of my difficulty. After I left Philadelphia, my enemies exerted themselves to the uttermost to ruin my character, and prevent my usefulness. What they published, was examined and proved false, and their violent dealings came down upon their own heads. In addition to all this, I had lost almost all my property, and what I had was in such a scattered situation, that it was impossible to collect it very fast, and my family expences in Philadelphia were constantly increasing. My situation looked to me distressing, and was continually growing worse. All this was but small compared to what I afterwards passed through.



In November of that year, I was taken sick, with the typhus fever, about the time I calculated to return home. I was at brother Joseph Mason's, in Swarzey. He, his wife, and family did all in their power for my help; and had I been their own child they could not have shewn more kindness. The Lord reward them an hundred fold.

In this sickness I was brought to the sides of the grave; and for several days, Dr. Winslow, who attended me, said it was a matter of doubt with him, whether I should live or die. The doctor understood the nature of the disease, and the medicine used was blest to my recovery. In three weeks, I was able to go on my journey. After being able to ride, my mind was unsettled as to what was duty. Not being strong enough to journey to Philadelphia, I concluded to go as far as Portsmouth; and as soon as my health would allow, visit my family.

My only intention in going to Portsmouth was, to see my friends, and tarry till ready to go on to the south. In a few days, I was like a man who had been lost; so that every thing seemed wrong to him, until he came to a certain place. My mind was settled that Portsmouth was the place to carry my family. I wrote on to my wife to be ready to come on in February. I engaged a four wheel carriage, purchased another horse, and calculated to set out, so as to be in Portsmouth with my family in March. Several things prevented my setting out so soon as I at first contemplated. On the twenty-seventh of February, I received a letter from Elder J. Plumer, that my second daughter, and my wife were both sick of a typhus fever. He stated that my wife was taken the Sunday night before, and he had but little hope of her life. My daughter, he stated, was not considered dangerous. This news brought a grievous weight on my mind; as I expected from what he wrote, that she would die. I waited till the next Friday, before another letter came. That informed me that my daughter was better, and that my wife died on Sunday morning, twenty-seventh of February, eighteen hundred and fourteen. My mind, was in a small measure, prepared to meet the tidings, though but little prepared to bear the loss. For sometime I thought my mind would sink under the additional trouble which this brought me into; and from which I saw no way for deliverance. I was left with six children. One only was married, the others young, and strangers in a strange land.

On Saturday, March 4th, I sat out with my carriage, determined, if possible, to reach Philadelphia soon. After riding to Taunton, the frost came out of the ground, and by the time I reached Swarzey, the travelling was so bad, that I was obliged to leave my horse and carriage, and go a few miles in the stage. The travelling remained so bad, and hearing that my children were well taken care of, I delayed the journey till

the last of April, and then went on, determining to bring my children to Portsmouth.

After my arrival in Philadelphia, my second daughter was married there, and as the New-England states were much distressed by the British, my friends advised me to leave my three little children there till September. This I did, sold my horse, and the three last days in June, went from Philadelphia to Providence, R. I. and though almost always in company; yet continually alone.

In the latter part of the year eighteen hundred and fourteen, I was married to RACHEL THURBER, daughter of SAMUEL THURBER, Esq. of Providence, Rhode-Island. In her I have obtained favor of the Lord, and my little children a mother whom they love and esteem.

This year, a baptist minister, by the name of David Benedict, of Pautucket, R. I. undertook to publish what he called, an history of the baptists, in America. As it stands in my mind, he, to do all in his power, to fix on me a lasting reproach, at least among the baptists, to the latest generation, wrote the following, and printed it, to send into the world as truth.

“Mr. Elias Smith, formerly a preacher of good repute in the Warren association, has, within a few years past, formed a party of considerable extent in different States, which are sometimes called *Smithites*, but more generally *Christians*, which last name their founder seems peculiarly solicitous of maintaining. Mr. Smith is a man of popular talents, but unusually changeable in his religious creed. He has propagated, at different times, *calvinism*, *universalism*, *arminianism*, *arianism*, *socinianism*, and other *isms* too numerous to mention. He has also advanced the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked after death. He professes to explode all creeds and confessions, and denominates himself and followers, with a peculiar emphasis, *Christians*. He has published a multitude of books to defend his opinions, or rather to oppose those of all others. Many have become his disciples, of whom some believe more and some less of his changeable opinions. The large church in Dartmouth, Massachusetts, consisting of about six hundred members, has been dropped from the Groton conference, on account of their adhering to this singular man. A number of other churches of different associations have been shaken and diminished, by the too successful exertions of him and his associates. Many, doubtless, have fallen in to his train, who, with better leaders or less leading, would have acted a more becoming part. Among the free-will baptists, Mr. Smith was, in many places, very cordially received; for he is as strenuous as ever for believers' baptism, although he is constantly belaboring the baptists, both from the pulpit and press. But the free-will brethren, finding him expert at know-beating calvinism, were ambitious of placing him among

the champions of their cause. He was the means of introducing some innovations amongst them, both as it respects doctrine and discipline ; but whether they still listen to his instructions, I have not learnt. Mr. Smith has been a few years in Philadelphia, where he founded a small church, which has lately published a pamphlet, containing a number of very severe strictures upon his conduct ; and he is now about settling again in New-England."—[See *Benedict's Bap. Hist.* page 411.]

To speak the most favorable of this piece, is to call it the fruits of *ignorance* or *partiality*. Several statements here are false, and prove the writer a *sectarian* rather than an *historian*.

1. I am not the founder of a party called Smithites or Christians. *Christians* are mentioned in the new-testament, and *Christ* their founder. This I have always declared, and this all my brethren believe.

2. I am not so very strenuous for long *I*, nor short *i*, in the word CHRISTIAN. It is the follower of Christ I contend for and not the particular manner of pronouncing *i*.

3. I have never been so "unusually changeable" in my religious creed. Through the influence of others, in the days of my ignorance, I embraced calvinism, and when I understood the extent of it, universalism was at the end. As to propagating arminianism, arianism, socinianism, and other *isms*, too numerous to mention, it was never done by me, and I shall yet put him to prove it, or abide the consequences. There is no man can prove that I ever embraced any *sectarian doctrines*, since I left all their *creeds and systems*, in the year 1814.

4. He declares I have advanced the doctrine of the *annihilation* of the wicked after death. This is another falsehood ; the word nor doctrine of annihilation is not in any book written by me. Mr. Benedict would by this, have people believe, that I advance, that when the wicked die, that is their end ; but my bible does not read so, nor did I ever so preach or write. The wicked are reserved unto the day of judgment to be punished ; and all in their graves will hear the voice of the Son of God, and come forth ; they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation. There the wicked will be punished with everlasting destruction ; this will be their end. "Whose end is destruction."

5. The church gathered in Philadelphia, in the time of my residence there, never wrote against me ; but in my favor. Those who wrote against me, were a *body politic*, who were incorporated some time before.

Mr. Benedict knew I was in good repute among the baptists, before the time of leaving them, and he also *knew* that my leaving them was the only cause of having no reputation among them, when he wrote this piece of misrepresentation.

As to what he says of the shaking among the baptist churches, and their diminution, it is true ; for many see the iniquity



which attends this anti-christian combination, and leave it for the government of Christ. So much of Mr. Benedict's piece now, and the remainder, after conversing with him, in the next volume. I hope not to have occasion to apply this saying to Mr. B. "*Thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee.*"

The last of September, in this year, I attended a general meeting in Danville, Vt. From there rode to Woodstock. In October, went to Ballstown, Milton, Gallaway, Charleston, on the Mohawk River, Schenectady, Albany, New-Baltimore, and several other towns in New-York state; and preached there, almost every day, until-December 8th, and then rode to Hartford, New-London and Groton, in Connecticut; preached and baptised there. The second Sunday in January, eighteen hundred and fifteen, was in Providence, confined ten days with the ague in my face. After being able to journey, my wife came on with me, and arrived at Portsmouth, N. H. January twenty-first, eighteen hundred and fifteen; went to my hired house, which had but little in it, excepting some wood, and a few chairs to set in. Though we were destitute of almost every kind of furniture, food and money, yet the Lord raised up friends around us, whose hearts and hands were open to supply us with such things as we stood in need of, as fast as our wants returned.

My furniture in Philadelphia I sold, and parted with every article, down to knives, forks and spoons. Though I married a rich man's daughter, she had when she left her father's house, only the fruit of her hands; so that her own works praised her and not another. From January to June, I was constantly employed, in writing my paper, settling my accounts, writing some of my "*Life, Travels, &c.*" and preaching the gospel of the kingdom.

In June, I attended the general meeting in Danville, Vt. rode to Woodstock, preached in Lebanon, and Andover, and returned in three weeks. From the last week in July, to the first of November, I went three journeys into the State of Newhampshire; one to the district of Maine, one to the south side of Massachusetts, and one journey to Connecticut. In three months, and one week, I rode twenty-three hundred miles; spake almost every day, and generally, from an hour and an half to two hours; was at home twenty days only in the whole time; and had many times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and joined with the thousands in praising God and the Lamb. In December, I rode once to Boston and returned. The same month, went again to Boston, preached there, in Bristol, Warren, and Swanzey, and returned home the first of January, eighteen hundred and sixteen.



## CHAPTER XL.

Every person who reads this journal will be convinced, that the author has not lived an idle life. But few have journeyed and spake more in the course of twenty-five years. Many have considered me a bad man; because so many professors of religion have been against me, but it has been my desire to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world, looking for that blessed hope. Many have been told, that I held a diminutive idea of Christ, but they may rest assured, that I believe all the scriptures say of him, who is the brightness of his Father's glory; the express image of his person; worthy of more glory than *Moses*; greater than *Solomon*, higher than the kings of the earth. Much better than the angels; Lord of all: the one lawgiver, able to save and destroy; the bishop of souls, the leader and commander of the people, the light of the world; who in all things has the pre-eminence. For him and his perfect law of liberty, I have suffered trouble as an evil doer; through him I hope for glory, honor, immortality, and eternal life. That my friends and enemies may know how my mind stands, as it respects the commands and doctrines of men, and the scriptures of truth, I here present them with my solemn PROTEST, against all man-made systems of doctrine, and invented power, contrary to Christ and the scriptures of truth; that they may have my mind, when my race on earth is run and my course is finished.

## PROTEST.

I do in the first place publicly declare, that the *Holy Scriptures* which contain a revelation of the will of God, are the only *sure, authentic and infallible Rule* of the faith and practice of every Christian, by which *all opinions* are to be *fairly and impartially examined*; and in consequence of this, I do *protest* against setting up and allowing the *decrees* of any man, or body of men, as of *equal authority* and obligation with the word of God; whether they be *councils, synods, convocations, associations, missionary societies, or general assemblies*; whether *ancient or modern, Romish, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregational, Baptist, or Methodist, Popes, Fathers, or Doctors of Divinity*.

I do farther assert and maintain, according to the doctrine of *Christ* and the *Apostles*, and the practice of *Christians*, in the first century; that in all things essential to the faith and practice of a *Christian*, the Scriptures are plain, and easy to be understood, by all who will diligently and impartially read and study them; and that charging the *Scriptures* with obscurity and uncertainty, is contrary to the plain declaration of the Scriptures, and is an *abuse* of the rule given for *Christians* to walk by, an insult upon that *Holy Spirit* by which the authors of them were *guided*, and a wicked reproach thrown upon them by *ignorant, corrupt and wicked hirelings*, to draw men

into a *slavish dependence* on them ; that by thus representing the Scriptures as a *dark book*, they have *hood-winked* the followers of Christ, and others, that they might render them *implicit believers* in their arbitrary decrees, and make them, without controul, subservient to the views of their *ambition, avarice, pride and luxury*.

I do farther assert, that every *Christian* is under an indispensable obligation to *search the Scriptures for himself*, and make the best use of it he can for his information in the *will of God*, and the nature of "*Pure Religion*;" that he hath an *unalienable right*, impartially to judge of the sense and meaning of it, and to follow the Scriptures wherever it leads him, even an equal right with the Bishops and Pastors of the churches ; and in consequence of this, I farther *protest* against that unrighteous and ungodly pretence of making the writings of the fathers, the *decrees of councils and synods*, or the *sense of the church*, the *rule and standard of judging* of the sense of the Scriptures, as *Popish, Anti-Christian, and dangerous to the Church of God*.

I do farther assert and maintain, that every *Christian* hath an equal right to the peaceable and constant possession of what he believes to be the truth contained in the Scriptures, and ought to be left by all men, and secured by *civil government*, in the full and undisturbed enjoyment of them ; even though his principles may be, in many things, contrary to what the Reverend D. D's call *Orthodoxy* ; or what the *priest ridden* call truth ; barely because they never searched the Scriptures to know whether what they think true, is so or not.

As truth is no *private man's property*, and as all *Christians* are under obligations to propagate it ; I do also declare, that every *Christian* has a right to publish and vindicate what he believes is contained in the Scriptures ; to speak and write against all *corruption of the word*, either in doctrine or practice ; and to expose the errors of *good men*, and the *wickedness, oppression and hypocrisy of ungodly men*, who bind heavy burdens on men ; who devour widows houses, and for a pretence make long prayers ; that every *Christian* has not only a right, but is commanded to separate from such professors, whose doctrine and worship is contrary to what he finds recorded in the Scriptures ; and that he has a right to enjoy without *disturbance, oppression or disgrace*, or any kind of *punishment*, civil or ecclesiastical, the liberty of serving God, with any other *company of Christians*, as he shall judge most expedient and useful to him. And though, as a *consistent Christian*, I *protest* against all the ungodly claims of *spiritual men*, as they are called, and all *authoritative and coercive church power*, as it is wrongly termed, and though the *Clergy* of no sort or degree, are to be considered or submitted to, as *heads of the church ; spiritual vicegerants ; divine envoys ; infallible interpreters of scripture ;*

*successors of the apostles ; sovereign directors of men's consciences ; doctors of divinity ; parsons ; reverends, &c.* and ought not to be regarded when they pretend to such unwarranted characters ; yet I heartily acknowledge, that when any take the oversight of Christ's flock, not by constraint, but willingly ; not for filthy *Lucre*, but of a ready mind ; when ministers act, not as *lords over God's heritage*, but as ensamples of the flock ; when they take heed to all the flock, the poor as well as the rich, to feed the Church of God with the sincere milk of the word ; then, and only then, is *respect due to their persons ; regard and submission to their instructions ; and a liberal and willing maintenance to their diligence and fidelity.*

These are the principles of a *real and consistent Christian*. Upon these principles, the first Christians acted, and these I am more and more determined through God's help, to propagate and defend with my *tongue, pen, and example*, against all persons whatever, who shall attempt to oppose such *just principles* ; calculated to relieve men from the *hard hand of tyrannical oppressors*, under the name of ministers of Christ, from *grievous loads of clerical taxation year by year for life* ; to relieve them from bodies and systems of doctrines and commandments of men ; to lead them to Christ as *head*, the Scriptures as *laws*, and to encourage the ministers of Christ, " to go forth weeping, bearing precious seed, that they may come again rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them ; " a cause which opens to each believer, with the present, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. AMEN.

*Given under my hand and seal, March 1, 1816.*

ELIAS SMITH.

Having protested against all these unscriptural things, I leave the following to the world, as my full and hearty belief of the scriptures of truth, which contain a record of the revelation from God to man :

#### THE SCRIPTURES.

"A nation must be truly blessed, if it were governed by no other laws, than those of this blessed book ; it is so complete a system, that nothing can be added to it, or taken from it ; it contains every thing needful to be known or done ; it gives instruction and counsel to a senate ; authority and direction for a magistrate ; it cautions a witness ; requires an impartial verdict of a jury, and furnishes the judge with his sentence ; it sets the husband as lord of the household, and the wife as mistress of the family, tells HIM how to rule, and HER how to manage : It entails honor to parents, and enjoins obedience to children. It prescribes and limits the sway of the sovereign, the rule of the ruler, and authority of the master ; commands the subject to honor, and the servants to obey ; and promises the blessings and protection of its AUTHOR, to all that walk



by its rules ; it promises food and raiment, and limits the use of both. It points out a faithful and an Eternal Guardian to the departing husband and father ; tells him with whom to leave his fatherless children, and in whom his widow is to trust, *Jeremiah* xlix. 11. It teaches a man how to make his will : It defends the rights of all ; and reveals vengeance to every defrauder, over-reacher, and oppressor. It is the *first* book ; the *best* book ; and the *oldest* book in the world ; it contains the choicest matter ; gives the best instruction ; and affords the greatest pleasure and satisfaction that ever was revealed : It contains the best of laws, and profoundest mysteries that ever was penned : It brings the best tidings, and affords the best of comfort, to the inquiring and disconsolate : It exhibits life and immortality from everlasting, and shews the way to glory : It is a brief recital of all that is past and a certain prediction of all that is to come : It settles all matters in debate, resolves all doubts, and eases the mind and conscience of all their scruples : It reveals the only living and true GOD, and shews the way to him ; and sets aside all other gods, and describes the vanity of them. In short, it is a book of laws, to shew right and wrong ; a book of wisdom, that condemns all folly, and makes the foolish wise ; a book of truth, that detects all lies, and confutes all errors ; and a book of life, that shews the way from everlasting death. It is the most compendious book in all the world, the most authentic, and the most entertaining history that ever was published. It contains the most ancient antiquities, strange events, wonderful occurrences, heroic deeds, unparalled wars : It describes the celestial, terrestrial, and eternal worlds ; and the origin of the angelic myriads, human tribes, and devilish legions : It will instruct the most accomplished mechanic, and the profoundest artist : It will teach the best rhetorician, and exercise every power of the most skilful arithmetician, *Revelations* xiii. 18 ; puzzle the wisest anatomist, and exercise the nicest critic : It corrects the vain philosopher, and confutes the wisest astronomer : It exposes the subtle sophist, and makes diviners mad : It is a complete code of laws, a perfect body of divinity, an unequalled narrative ; a book of lives, a book of travels, and a book of voyages. It is the best covenant that ever was agreed on, the best deed that ever was produced ; the best will that ever was made, and the best testament that ever was signed. To understand it, is to be wise indeed ; to be ignorant of it, is to be destitute of wisdom. It is the magistrate's best guide ; the servant's best directory, and the young man's best companion : It is the school boy's spelling-book, and the learned man's master-piece : It contains a choice grammar for a novice, and a profound mystery for a sage : It is the ignorant man's dictionary, and the wise man's directory : It encourages the wise, and promises an eternal reward to the excellent.



And that which crowns all is, that the Author is without partiality, and without hypocrisy, "IN WHOM IS NO VARIABLENESS OR SHADOW OF TURNING."

#### TO CONCLUDE.

At the present time wars have ceased to the ends of the earth, and there is now a great calm. Many who have for years been my enemies, are either *dead*, *converted* to God, *convinced*, or *ashamed*; and this is the most peaceable time with me, that I have seen in twelve years. My children are well provided for, at the houses of their husbands, among my friends, or in their father's house. Though I remain poor, yet the Lord has provided, and still provides for us. The greater part of the debts which so much troubled me two years ago, are now paid, and there is a prospect of being clear from them all before many months.

Thirteen years ago, I did not think to see so many preachers and brethren, with the name and law of Christ only, in thirty years, as I now see. There are about fifty preachers in the New-England states, and the state of New-York. These are now travelling and preaching, in various parts with great success. Our brethren in Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia and the Western country, are striving for the faith of the gospel. The commandments and doctrines of men are perishing in the using.

Through the whole, I have been nothing, and Christ all. I am yet a debtor to Grace, and thank Christ Jesus, who counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry. There is but little for me to hope for in this life, and that but for a short time. In the life to come, is all that mortals can want.

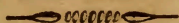
Many who read this, I shall never see on earth; but if you are Christians indeed, we shall, if faithful unto death, meet no more to part. The Lord forgive my enemies, instruct the ignorant, comfort the feeble, encourage the strong, and hasten the day, when the seventh angel's trump shall proclaim the mystery of God finished: the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ, and all nations call him blessed, and,

" Every creature rise and sing;  
Peculiar honors to their King;  
Angels descend with songs again,  
And earth repeat the *long—AMEN.*"

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