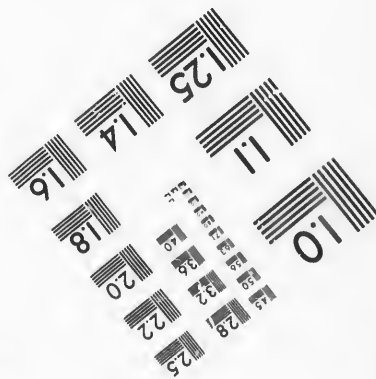
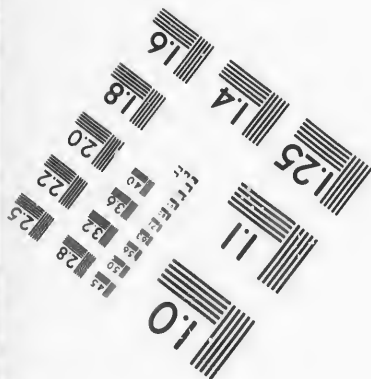
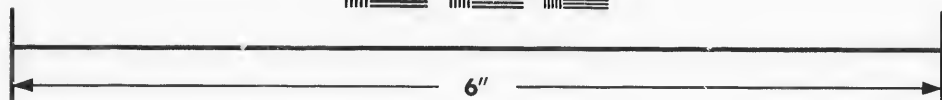
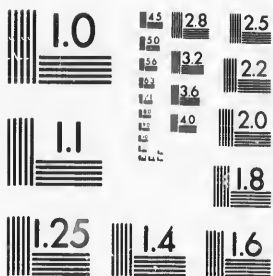


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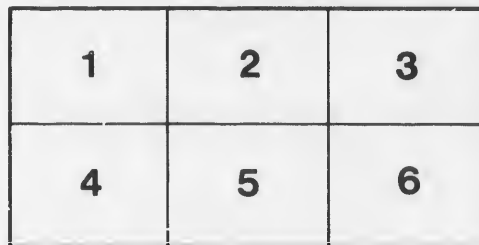
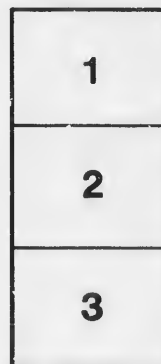
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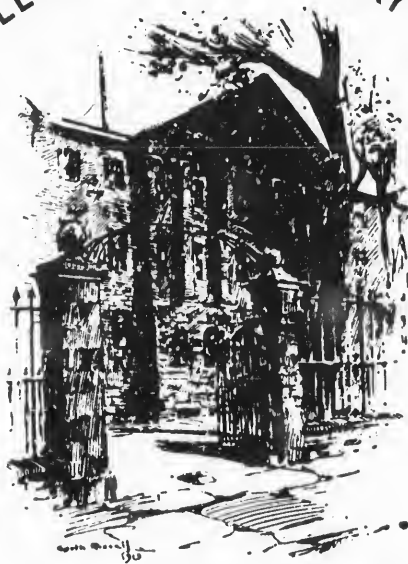
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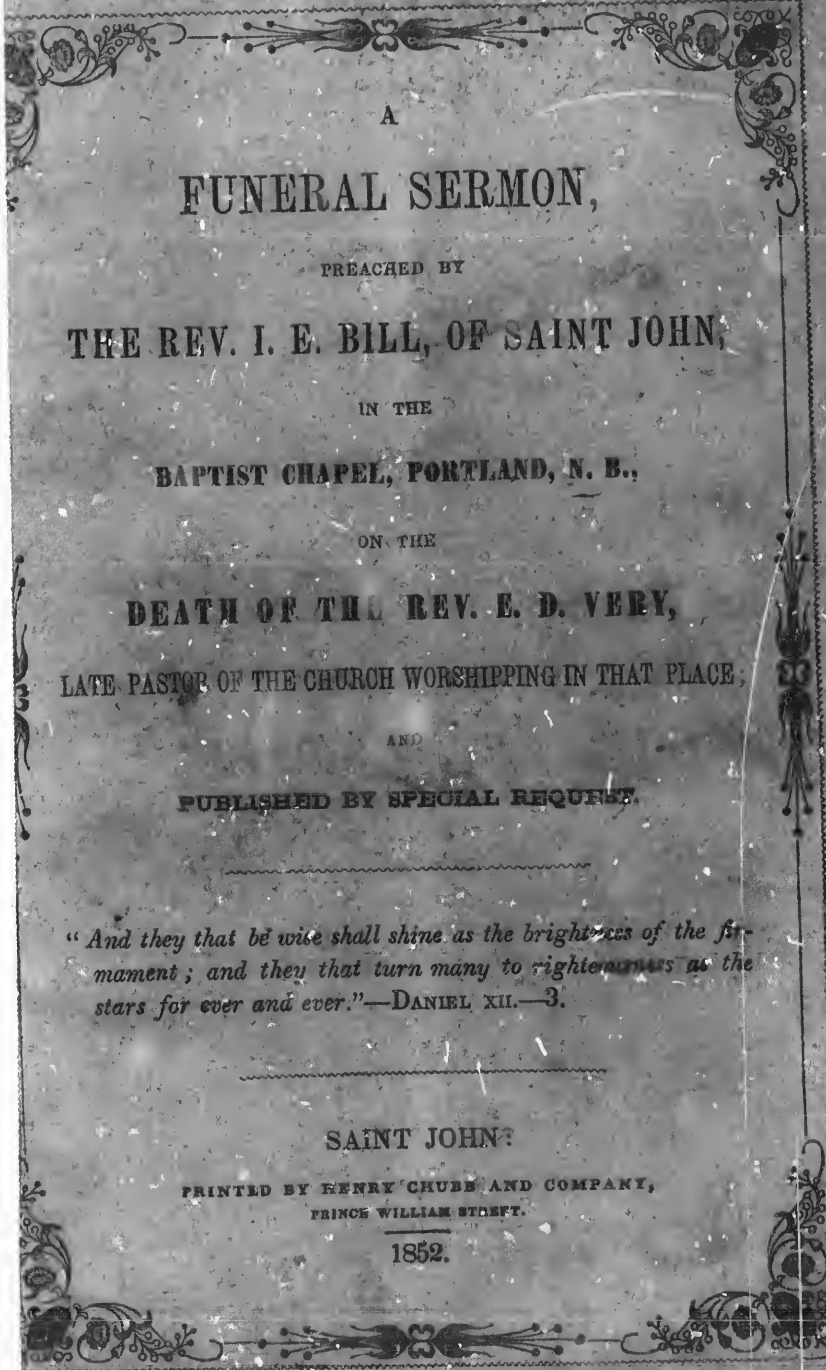
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A

FUNERAL SERMON,

PREACHED BY

THE REV. I. E. BILL, OF SAINT JOHN,

IN THE

BAPTIST CHAPEL, PORTLAND, N. B.,

ON THE

DEATH OF THE REV. E. D. VERY,

LATE PASTOR OF THE CHURCH WORSHIPPING IN THAT PLACE;

AND

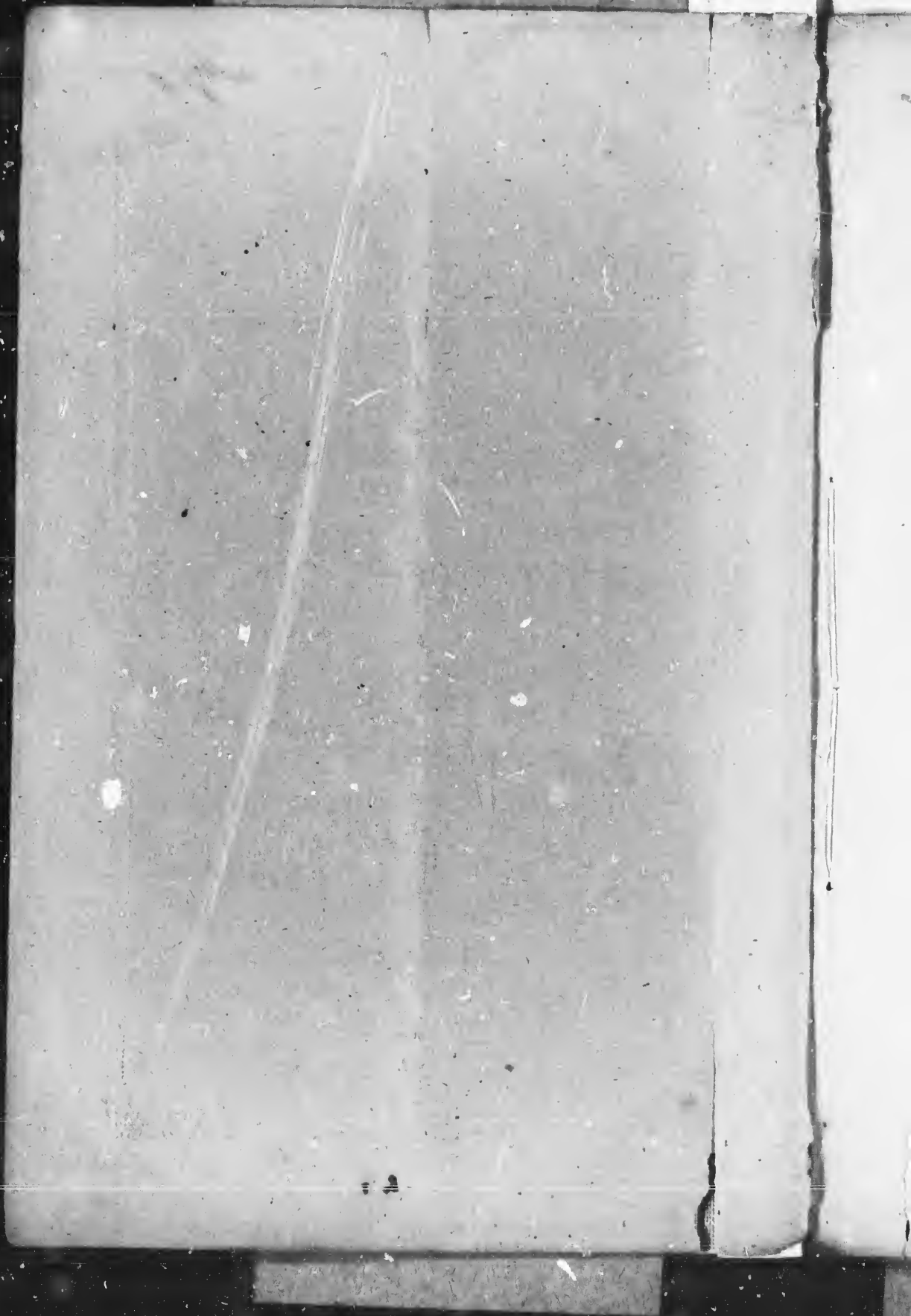
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“And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.”—DANIEL XII.—3.

SAINT JOHN:

**PRINTED BY HENRY CHUBB AND COMPANY,
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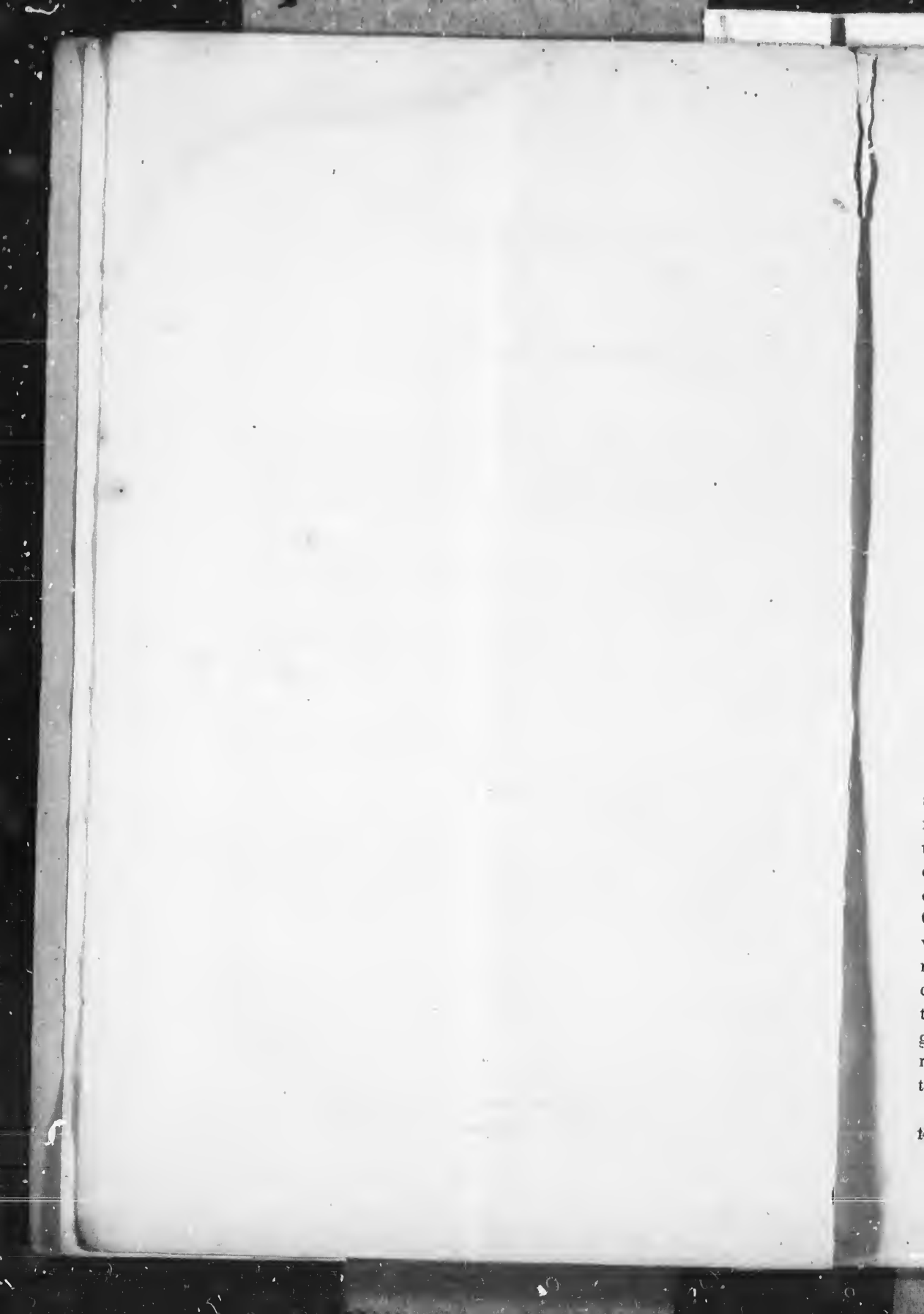
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PREFACE.

THE following discourse, with the exception of the leading propositions, was delivered without the use of notes. The publication of it was not designed by the Author; but as the friends of the highly esteemed servant of God, whose sudden removal from our midst we so much deplore, have earnestly requested to have it in its present form, the Preacher deems it his duty to comply with their wishes, in the hope that this humble tribute of respect to one, with whom he had been accustomed to hold delightful fellowship in the Gospel, may be the means of stimulating others to follow the example of him who, through faith and patience, is now inheriting the promises.

The Author feels unfeigned pleasure in making a most valuable addition to the discourse, by inserting a deeply interesting letter, from the pen of the Rev. RUFAS BABCOCK, D. D., of New-York, received since its delivery, in which the early religious experience and Christian character of our lamented Brother are graphically and touchingly described.



SERMON.

"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."—1 COR. xv.—25.

THE chapter from which my text is selected is one of the most deeply interesting portions of the sacred volume. It is impossible to read it with an understanding heart without being convinced that its wondrous disclosures are admirably adapted to the necessities of our race.

In this inspired reasoning we see put in impressive contrast the frailty and weakness of man, and the might and majesty of the Lord God Omnipotent.

It recognizes the universal ruin of man by sin, his consequent subjection to the power of death, and to the dominion of the grave; and proclaims his deliverance and restoration to the Divine favour, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

Heresies had sprung up in the Churches planted by the Apostles, and among others, a denial of the resurrection of the body. This species of scepticism had been introduced into the Church in Corinth, and was sowing the seeds of discord and strife. For the purpose of meeting these false reasonings of infidelity, the Apostle argues out the whole question, and in a strain of unrivalled force and beauty establishes the doctrine of the *resurrection*, as the only foundation of human hope. He boldly asserts, "If the dead rise not, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." He proceeds to say, "By one man came death, by one man came also the resurrection of the dead." The idea is this: by virtue of our sinful connexion with the first Adam, we fall a prey to the king of terrors; but by the grace of the second Adam, we are rescued from his authority, and raised to immortality. He goes on to assure us, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

Allow me on this solemn occasion to invite your prayerful attention to two thoughts suggested by this passage—

I. *The fact*—Death is man's enemy.

II. *The promise.* This enemy shall be destroyed.

I. I remark death is man's enemy, inasmuch as it is the infliction of punishment in consequence of sin.

It is not an original law of man's nature, but is the result of *disobedience*. While our first parents stood in their primitive innocence, disease and death had no dominion over them. The tree of life, that stood in the midst of the lovely Eden, was a perfect safeguard against both. The first pair, in their purity, had free access to it; but they sinned, and the consequence was, exclusion from its healing leaves. A cherubim and a flaming sword turned every way to guard the tree, lest man should pluck and live for ever. This separation from the healthful properties of the tree of life, left them and their posterity not only exposed to the ravages of disease, but to the reign of death. Hence *death is the legitimate result of sin*. Transgression against the righteous law of Heaven has armed him with his sovereignty, and placed the fatal dart in his hand. So argues the Apostle—"For if by one man's offence, death reigned by one." "Sin hath reigned unto death." "The wages of sin is death."

Man, therefore, in the prospect of death, turns pale, shivers and shrinks back. He meets all other foes with a firm step and undaunted face, but the approach of his last foe fills him with dismay. Why? Because conscience, true to itself, confirms the testimony that we are consigned to death, as the fruit of our rebellion. Man labours to ward off the fatal blow, but he finds it impossible. The stern decree of Heaven has gone forth, and it must be met. Other enemies may be conquered, but this adversary pursues his course steadily, through every lane of life. How wide-spread and fearful the desolation! No age, no class, no position in society, is exempt from his tyranny. As we look upon the slaughtered millions we must remember that the curse of God has fallen upon them, as an expression of His holy hatred to transgression.

Again, Death is our enemy, because he dissolves our *earthly connexions*.

He separates the soul from the body, and places that part of our nature, so essential to the enjoyments of time, in circumstances in which it is compelled to turn to corruption. Strength departs, beauty fades, and we lie powerless with the clods of the valley. In

death man must leave the possessions for which he has so long, and so diligently laboured, the home where he has dwelt in comfort, and independence, and exchange all the resources of worldly advancement and bliss for the loneliness and poverty of the grave. He must say to corruption, "Thou art my mother, and to the worm, thou art my sister."

How humbling the thought that man, who converts the wilderness into a fruitful field, who erects costly mansions, builds ships, traverses oceans, gives birth to railroads, multiplies cities, chains the lightning, and guides the destiny of empires—that he, after a few fleeting years, should be doomed to lie down in the grave! What a check to the pride and ambition of the human soul!

Again, Death is an enemy, inasmuch as he severs *the tenderest ties of life, and robs us of our dearest friends.*

Our children bloom as the morning flower, and become the joy and pride of our hearts; but disease attacks, death follows, and we are wrapped in mourning.

What painful separations result from the progress of the destroyer! The husband sees the wife of his bosom stricken down by his side, and he hastens to bury her from his sight. The widow weeps in loneliness, because he upon whom she leaned for happiness and support, as her best earthly friend, sleeps in death.

What terrible blanks are made in society by the fatal dart! How frequently it happens that men of sterling integrity, literary attainments, of commanding talent, and of influential positions, are, in the prime of life, summoned to eternity!

The Church of God is often invaded by the relentless foe. "The righteous fail from amongst the children of men." The house of God is clad in sackcloth, because of vacancies that have occurred there; and the sacred desk is shrouded in mourning, because he who oft proclaimed there the message of mercy and love divine, has been called suddenly to exchange worlds.

Is it not true, my brethren, that the king of terrors has transformed this once beautiful world into a charnel-house, and filled it with dead men's bones? Yes, he has written upon every page of man's experience lamentation and woe. The cries of widows and orphans are now ascending to Heaven, as a memorial against him.

Death throws his barbed arrow from his quiver—the most endearing ties are sundered, the most brilliant stars become extinct, and the pall of sorrow overpreads the Church of God.

Against the ravages of this insidious foe what have we to present? The text informs us. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

II. We proceed to consider the promise.

Death shall be destroyed. The idea is, he shall be overcome.

This is the promise of God's revelation to man. He tells us by the Prophet Isaiah, "He will swallow up death in victory;" and by the Prophet Hosea he declares, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death. O, death! I will be thy plagues. O, grave! I will be thy destruction." The New Testament renews this promise, and in language most impressive assures us that death shall be conquered. We believe, therefore, that death shall be destroyed, because He who cannot lie hath promised it, and He will not alter the thing that hath gone out of His mouth.

But, you enquire, by whom shall the conquest be achieved? I answer, by the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person.

He became incarnate, and entered the field of conflict against this adversary. "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death; that is, the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." The Son of God assailed the power of death in a variety of forms, and in every instance was found more than a match for him.

He frequently arrested the progress of disease in a manner which demonstrated his ability to ward off the uplifted blow. Diseases of all sorts were rebuked by him; and if the sick and the dying of the whole world had been brought to him, his power was sufficient to restore them all. Death stood confounded in his presence. He saw his design defeated, his pointed arrows blunted, and the right arm of his power broken.

What an affecting spectacle! to behold the Son of the Eternal, treading these lower grounds, and surveying on all hands the devastations of the mighty foe! He first fashioned the world, and flooded it with the vital element. All creation was happy in the enjoyment of its Maker, and all pronounced good; but now the scene was changed—all nature was drooping under the power of

disease, and the shadows of death brooding over the brightest hopes of man; the knell of death sounding its terrible notes, the funeral car followed by long trains of mourners, and crowds of bereaved fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, lamenting the departure of those whom Death had smitten, and made his prey. As he gazed upon this mournful panorama, his infinite compassion was moved, and he resolved to save. Hence he disarmed death by saying authoritatively to the sick, "Take up thy bed and walk."

But he not only illustrated his power by healing all manner of diseases; he went farther, and restored *the dead to life*.

On one occasion we hear him saying to a young female sleeping in death, "Damsel, arise." And she arose, to the astonishment and joy of her friends.

At another time, he meets Death conveying his victim to the grave; he commands the bier to stand still, bids the young man arise, and the prisoner of death obeys the mandate—the vital principle reanimates his body, and he is restored alive to his widowed mother.

Again, we see him standing by the grave of one who had been dead four days; and on whom decomposition had probably commenced its work. But he cries with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" and the dead man started from his slumber, and stood up as a testimony to all generations of the power of the Redeemer of Man to conquer death.

But it was not enough that he should treat with Death simply in relation to others; he must meet him in deadly *personal* conflict: He must allow him to fix his poisoned dart in his own vitals, and contend with him upon his own territory. This he did when he hung a bleeding victim upon the cross. Amazing condescension! He who had laid the foundations of the universe, and reared the magnificent temple; he who had life in himself, as the Father hath life in Himself, and who, by his own fiat, had diffused the mysterious element through all creation; that *he* should thus throw himself into the arms of death, and in awful agony give up the ghost! How wondrous the deed! But he had "power to lay down his life, and he had power to take it again." If he would destroy death in harmony with the Divine perfections, he must yield his own life, as a sacrifice for human guilt, go down into the gloomy chamber of the sepulchre, and plant in that desolate spot the tree of immortality.

If you ask, where the great battle was fought with man's deadly foe? I answer, in Joseph's new tomb, hewn out of a rock. Thither the Son of God pursued him, that he might give him all possible advantage in the contest. But the monster fell powerless at the feet of the Almighty Saviour,—the sceptre was wrested from his hand, and the omnipotent conqueror arose, dragging him at his own chariot wheels, and proclaiming with a loud voice, that was heard reverberating through the dark caverns of the dead, "I am the resurrection and the life: He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

But you ask, could death be destroyed in no other way? This was the way which Infinite Wisdom devised, and Boundless Love and Omnipotent Energy executed. Man, by disobedience, had subjected himself to death, and justice required that he should be consigned over eternally to its dominion, unless an ample atonement could be made in the person of a substitute. The claims of the Divine administration could not be disannulled. They must be met. The death of the Incarnate Son of God was the marvellous expedient which the Councils of Heaven decreed should answer these demands in the sinner's behalf. The mysterious event has taken place; God is reconciled, and a foundation laid for the complete triumph of all believers, against which "the gates of hell shall not prevail."

But what a period of awful suspense was that when Jesus was in the sepulchre! Hell was in triumph, the Disciples in despair, and angels waiting, in terrible anxiety, *the issue!* If the Royal Prisoner remained in that position, all hope for man was gone; the purposes of mercy frustrated; Heaven shrouded in mourning, and the authority of the Supreme trampled in the dust. But, behold the earth quakes, an angel is despatched from the eternal throne, to roll away the stone. Jesus rises from the sepulchre: Angels are in waiting to announce to his disciples, "He is not here, he is risen, come see the place where the Lord lay." While other celestial messengers bear the joyful tidings through all the regions of glory, now is brought to pass the saying that is written, "*Death is swallowed up in victory.*"

The resurrection of Christ must be regarded as a certain pledge of ultimate and eternal conquest.

The promise in my text will not be fully realized until the great harvest of the last day shall be gathered.

The resurrection of the body is purely a dogma of revelation. Heathen philosophy had no conception of this truth. It inculcated,

it is true, the probability of a future state, and taught its votaries to believe that they should endure the agonies of Tartarus, or taste the bliss of Elysium. Heathen warriors and heroes were stimulated with the hope that, if so fortunate as to arrive at Elysium, after death, they should there reap the fruits of their toils and victories, in eternal happiness. But the most enlightened system of heathen philosophy that ever existed, shed no light upon the darkness of the tomb. This glorious fact lies beyond the boundaries of human reason, and is entirely dependent for confirmation upon the revelation of God. The pages of ancient Scripture dimly revealed it, but the will of the Deity reserved for Christianity the honor of unfolding, as with the brightness of a sunbeam, the immortality of man.

The Sadducees questioned the possibility of the resurrection; but the Saviour said to them, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." As much as to say, this is not only a truth of revelation, but is in the hands of Omnipotence, and therefore there can be no impossibility in the case. "All things are possible with God." The work, great as it is, cannot overpass the energies of Omnipotence. Do we doubt this? Let us remember that there was a period when the High and Holy One alone occupied the boundless fields of space; and see now the universe teeming with living things, and can we doubt that He who could fill immensity with such a profusion of life, is fully adequate to raise the dead? Nay, every lamp which shines in the firmament, every insect that moves upon the earth, or that floats in the breeze, and every pulsation of the human system, is proof positive that there is nothing incredible in the statement that "God should raise the dead."

What though the subject be mysterious, and to the mind of man incomprehensible, yet all is plain to Him "who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."

So thoroughly confirmed was the Apostle in this doctrine, that he builds upon it the entire system of Christianity. Abolish this chief corner-stone, and the faith of the Gospel passes away as a vision of the night. But we rejoice to know that "the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

How extended the conquest, when this last enemy shall be destroyed! No victory recorded upon the page of the world's history is to be compared with it. The achievements of the Cæsars and of

the Alexanders of the world will all be lost in forgetfulness amid the glorious triumphs of the resurrection day. The mighty catacombs of earth, and the deep graves of the departed shall all be opened, and there shall be heard through all the chambers of death the voice of the omnipotent Saviour saying, "I am the resurrection and the life;" and then the myriads that have slept for ~~ages~~ shall feel the reanimating power of a new life, and start from their slumbers in resurrection splendour, to meet the Lord in the air. "The sea shall give up the dead that are in it, and death and hell shall deliver up the dead that are in them."

This victory is so much the more glorious, inas much as it is accomplished in the very territory over which Death had so long held universal sway. He is conquered on his own dominions, and overthrown on the spot that had been the scene of his desolating power.

Man asks, "How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?"

Of what materials our bodies will be formed it is impossible for us to say. We know that in the present state our bodies are defiled by sin—that they are dishonoured, weak and corruptible, and that, as such, they are doomed to *death*, and to the putrefaction of the grave. But revelation assures us that the body "is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." Again, we are told that our "vile body shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body." How inspiring the thought! Not like to what it was in his humiliation, but like to what it is in his exaltation.

On the mount of transfiguration, you remember, "his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." But even this was but a faint representation of the glory that now encircles his person, at his Father's right hand. His body was immaculate while here; but, with one solitary exception, it had no symptoms of peculiar glory. It was subject to death, as the substitute for human guilt; but having passed through the shades of death, it came up a glorious form, prepared for association with the unfading glories of his eternal kingdom.

Who can conceive of the glory of that body now enthroned in light, far above all principalities and powers, in the heavenly places?

The glory of cherubim and seraphim is eclipsed in the presence of the glorified body of our blessed Emanuel. How delightful the thought, then, that our vile, deranged, corrupt bodies shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body!

How shall we sufficiently extol and magnify the dignifying power of the Gospel of Christ, thus to elevate degraded humanity! "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him." Transporting promise!

Again, you enquire for whom shall death be destroyed? The answer is, for the Christian, and for the Christian only. It is true that the resurrection of the last day will be general. "There shall be a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust." "All that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and come forth. They that have done good, to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation." The righteous only will be raised to life. The wicked will be raised, but in his resurrection will be doomed to eternal death; so that death for him is not destroyed. But the redeemed of the Lord shall triumph in that day. Even now they have a pledge of their final victory. Man, as a sinner, dreads Death, and would gladly resist his approach, if he could; but as one ransomed by the blood of the Lamb, he gives him a cordial greeting. We have a beautiful illustration of the power of faith to conquer death, in the language of the Apostle. He says, "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better." "*To die is gain.*" "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand."

Many a saint has thus triumphed in the fearful hour. We have stood beside their dying couch, and as we have wiped the cold sweat from the serene brow of the sufferer, we have listened with joy unutterable to the exclamation of faith from their dying lips, saying, "O, death! where is thy sting? O, grave! where is thy victory?" This song is frequently sung, when not heard by mortal ear. The servant of God may be far from his home, his wife, and his little ones; he may find himself sinking, as lead, in the mighty waters; but even then his faith takes strong hold of the promise, and he glorifies God, "who giveth the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

But the exercise of faith in the Divine testimony is but the earnest or pledge of the final conquest, when "this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality."

What a glorious moment in the history of the Church will that be, when the last trumpet shall sound, the living be changed, and the dead raised up! Where, O! where is the height from which we can survey the cemeteries of earth, and the bosom of the great deep, as they open to pour forth from their deep recesses those bright forms of living light and glory? Myriads of myriads arise—the Patriarchs, who were buried before the Flood; the Prophets, who testified of the coming of Christ, and of the glory that should follow; the Apostles, who first preached Jesus and the resurrection; the Martyrs, who proved themselves faithful unto death; together with the redeemed of every age and name—all come forth at the command of the Eternal, arrayed in the habiliments of immortality, and made like unto the angels of God.

What a glorious company! Long centuries had separated the souls and the bodies of those sanctified ones, but the period has arrived when a blissful reunion takes place; and thus united, both are prepared for that perfection of happiness and glory which God has promised to all who love and obey Him.

Who can imagine the joy with which the Redeemer of Men will gaze upon this innumerable multitude of immortal beings raised from the degrading consequences of sin by his *own* power and grace, clad in unsullied robes, wrought by his obedience and death; and thus fully prepared to be presented by him to his Father, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing?

How transporting the joy of the Lord's people in that day! *Many* have been their trials, and *numerous* their foes; but the final conflict is over, and the "last enemy is destroyed." What remains for them but to hear from the lips of their Saviour and Judge, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world?" As they receive this invitation, they shrink away, conscious of their own unworthiness; but the Lord reassures them of His love; the golden gate of the Celestial City is thrown open for their admittance, and they march in holy triumph to take possession of those mansions of purity prepared for them by their risen Lord. With what rapturous feelings do they look upon the glories of the *Celestial Temple*, and join in swelling the heavenly chorus, saying, "Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father—to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen!"

But while all this is being enjoyed by the redeemed, "where will the sinner and the ungodly appear?" As we have heard, they rise at the command of the last trumpet, but they "rise to *everlasting shame and contempt.*" Those bodies so long engaged in the service of sin will be dragged in awful confusion to the judgment seat of Christ. In imagination we see them there shivering as the aspen leaf. Dark despair sits upon every brow, and terrible remorse preys upon every spirit. It is the judgment of the great day; and there they stand, like men upon the perilous edge of the battle-field, struggling with fearful apprehensions and conflicting emotions, while the Judge, with a frown that annihilates all hope, pronounces the terrible sentence, "*Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire!*" Mercy has finished her work, and inflexible Justice has commenced his direful reign with unmingled severity, which is to continue through limitless duration. Myriads unnumbered utter loud groans and shrieks of anguish, and sink under the crushing weight of eternal displeasure, to endure the awful consequences of a life of sin. "These shall go away into *everlasting punishment*, but the righteous into LIFE ETERNAL."

How important, then, beloved hearers, that we should embrace without delay that system of redeeming mercy just adapted to secure for us a glorious resurrection from the dead at the last day! The promise of God is sure. "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Let us, then, so believe in Christ, and so obey him, that when he comes he may find us as the faithful servant waiting for the return of his absent lord.

If I speak to those who have not closed in with the overtures of life, who have not realized the need of a Saviour, let me write upon your conscience the solemn truth, that you must all die; your bodies must lie low with the dust of the valley, but you shall rise again. God's holy book declares it. You cannot escape, when the terrible blast of the last trump utters the thrilling message, "Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment!" Then will every tomb give up its prey, and every one of us must give an account for the deeds done in the body. Fellow-sinner, you will be there. "Be ye, therefore, also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

But while we cannot but feel that the doctrine of the resurrection is pregnant with *terror to the impenitent*, it opens unfailing sources of *consolation to the Christian*. Does he stand upon the brink of the

grave, meditating upon his own mortality? He remembers that his Lord and Master was there before him, and transformed the dreary chamber into a mansion of calm and peaceful slumber for all his followers; and that all who sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.

Do we, as believers, think of beloved ones who have died in the Lord? Ah! who in this large assembly has not lost a near and dear relation? Who has not stood beside the bed of sickness and watched there with intense interest, and seen the feeble frame sinking under the blighting influence of disease? You have felt the tremulous pulse; you have knelt in solemn prayer, and arose to wipe the falling tear. You have witnessed the last struggles, as the spirit took its flight to the realms of glory. You have seen the precious remains confined in its narrow coffin; and as you stood beside the grave, and heard pronounced over that which was once so bright, so promising, so lovely, "Dust to dust, ashes to ashes," you have wept in bitterness, and mourned in sadness of spirit. But, dear brethren, was not the Saviour present? Did you not hear *his* gentle voice, saying, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is Death?"

"Array'd in glorious grace,
Shall these vile bodies shine."

Meditate upon this delightful truth, then, dear brethren, and as you look into the graves of those you have loved see those graves illumed by rays of glory, emanating from the throne of God and of the Lamb, and your *sorrow* shall be turned into *joy*.

But I hear some of you saying, "If I had only had the privilege of being present when my friend struggled in death—could I have whispered words of love and grace in his ear, to cheer him in that fatal moment, or could I have enjoyed the mournful pleasure of seeing him quietly laid in his last resting-place, it would assuage my grief, and calm my disturbed spirit; but, alas! alas! I was not there. My friend was alone in death, and strangers had to perform the funeral rites." And who art thou, my Christian friend, that thou shouldst reply against God, or repine at the chastening of a Father's hand? "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" "Be still, and know that I am God." True, you were not present, but angels of light were there, and the presence of the Deity illumined the dark valley and shadow of death for thy friend, and he sleeps in hope of a joyful reunion with thee in the resurrection morn.

Let us then, as Christians, stand upon the summit of a lofty faith; and although below us there may be storms and clouds of thick darkness, above us is the pure azure, and the glory of eternal sunshine. May we not, therefore, rejoice "that those light afflictions which are but for a moment are working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory?"

So may we feel in relation to your deeply lamented Minister, who rests in a distant grave. A mysterious Providence has suddenly and unexpectedly removed him from you, and we are here for the purpose of improving this melancholy event, and at the same time expressing the full-hearted sympathy which we feel for you in your present bereavement.

It is expected on the present occasion that I should make some remarks in reference to the character and labours of our departed Brother.

In looking over his papers, we find but little that refers to himself. The following memorandum, written by his own pen, is taken from his family Bible:—

E. D. VERY, born in Salem, Dec. 30, 1815.

Entered Waterville College, Sept. 1, 1834.

Graduated at Dartmouth, July 27, 1837.

Entered Bangor Theological Seminary, Oct. 12, 1837.

Ordained at East Machias, Sept. 10, 1838.

Settled at Calais, Dec. 1, 1838.

Married at East Machias, Sept. 2, 1839.

Commenced preaching in Watertown, the second Sabbath in Sept., 1843.

Commenced preaching in Belfast, last Sabbath in Feb., 1845.

Commenced preaching in Portland, N. B., last Sabbath in Dec., 1846.

From this memorandum it appears that our Brother was engaged in the Ministry about fourteen years. Upwards of eight years of this time was spent with different Churches in the New-England States, and the last six with the Church worshipping here. From other sources we have learned that his talents and labours were highly appreciated in his own country; but knowing something of the state of things in the British Provinces, he was deeply impressed with the idea that a great work was to be done here, and he felt a peculiar desire to embark in it. Hence, when this Church presented him with a call to become its Pastor, he unhesitatingly accepted it. Results have demonstrated that his impressions and desires were of God. He not only exerted himself with untiring assiduity for the

welfare of the Church in Portland, but he laboured diligently and successfully for the spiritual health of all our Churches, and for the prosperity of the country at large. The following notice of his efforts for the general good appeared in the *Christian Visitor*, a few weeks after his decease :—

“ His heart was strongly set upon the diffusion of useful knowledge throughout the Provinces generally, and New-Brunswick in particular. Although not a native, he was deeply interested in the intellectual and religious elevation of the country ; and he brought the energies of his strong mind to bear with great force upon this matter. His whole soul was absorbed in it. He felt that mental and religious improvement conjoined constitute the basis of a country's prosperity. Hence his unwearied and self-denying labours to scatter broad-cast all over the country books and periodicals adapted to all classes of the people, and in this way forming a taste for reading, especially in the young, which was telling with amazing power upon the advancement of the country's best good. Our Ministers and Churches generally throughout the Province were becoming deeply impressed with the magnitude of the interests he had in charge. The lamentation occasioned by his unexpected removal is heard in every village and neighbourhood throughout the country, and the general inquiry is, “ Where is the man to fill Brother Very's place ?”

In writing to an intimate friend, he modestly remarks, in respect to his labours in the Book Department, “ I have, in connexion with the Colporteur Establishment and Depository, imported and put in circulation 27,393 volumes, at a cost of between £1400 and £1500. Besides the *Visitor*, I have kept in circulation 800 copies of the *American Messenger*, and 500 copies of the *P. Gazette*.”

Who can measure the results of these exertions, until we see them in the light of the judgment of the great day ?

Foreign and Domestic Missions, Sabbath Schools, Bible and Tract Societies, and Educational Institutions, &c. &c., shared largely in his affections, his prayers, and his labours. You all know with what earnestness and zeal he was accustomed to plead for these important objects.

In conducting the periodical of the denomination he involved himself in much anxiety and toil ; but he was greatly cheered by the favourable reception given to the paper wherever it circulated. Its increase from five, to fifteen hundred copies, within the last two years, must have been peculiarly gratifying to his feelings. He justly regarded it as a powerful instrumentality for defending the truth,

and for diffusing it widely amongst the people. His selections, made with much care, were exceedingly judicious, and well adapted to his readers. His editorials were generally marked with sound, sterling sense, and uncompromising integrity. If they occasionally savoured of severity, the error generally leaned to virtue's side. He displayed an honesty of purpose and a frankness of character, which could but commend him, even to those who differed from him in opinion, as one *worthy of confidence and respect*.

As a theologian, his views of truth were comprehensive, clear and consistent. He recognized fully the sovereignty of God in the salvation of the Church; but he maintained with equal confidence that man is an accountable agent; that the message of mercy in the Gospel is freely and fully addressed to him, and that it is his solemn duty to embrace it without delay. It is somewhat remarkable that he made an explicit statement of his views upon these subjects, in a sermon which he preached at Wolfville, the Sabbath before his death, founded upon the passage, "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren." Competent judges present expressed themselves as being highly delighted and edified with his lucid exhibition of Scriptural doctrine on that occasion. *That last sermon will long be remembered.*

As a preacher, he was not, in the usual acceptance of the term, *eloquent*, but he was *powerful, pungent, and highly practical*. His sermons were rich in sound argument, and in Scriptural truth; full of weighty thoughts, and addressed with much point to the understanding and to the conscience. His strong forte was to edify the Church, to build her up in the truth, and to make her feel the responsibilities of her position, as the light of the world.

His sentiments being highly practical, his life partook largely of this element. He was emphatically a working man, and, like his Divine Master, he seemed constantly to realize his obligations to good. Blessed with a healthy constitution, as well as with a vigorous mind, he was enabled to labour indefatigably in the cause; and his mind being so thoroughly disciplined and trained for action, his labour was not only performed with comparative ease to himself, but a large amount of work was done in a short time. If his life was not as long as others, he has probably accomplished as much as most men do when life is prolonged to three score years and ten.

As a Christian Pastor, I need scarcely remind you how faithfully and affectionately he fulfilled the duties of his office. I know that you, the members of his flock, were in his heart to live and to die. He held communion with you in your sorrow and in your joy. His numerous duties, arising from his connexion with the general interests of the denomination, did not admit of his visiting, from house to house, as he otherwise would have done; but when at home, he was always with you in your social meetings, to give you such instructions and consolations as were adapted to your spiritual wants.

When you remember his instructive and impressive sermons, his earnest and appropriate prayers, his untiring labours in the Sabbath School, and in your social meetings, no wonder that you should feel that your loss is irreparable. We marvel not at the distress excited in your bosoms by the painful reflection that you will see his face, and hear his voice no more in time.

With many of you, young members, he has sympathised in the season of your distress, under a sense of your exposure to ruin. He pointed you to the cross, as the only way of escape: he rejoiced with you when you uttered your first note of praise to God for redeeming love: he led you into the baptismal waters, and introduced you into the Christian Church. No wonder, therefore, that you should exclaim, as did the Prophet, when Elijah went up in the chariot of fire, "*My Father! My Father!*" To all of you he has administered the sacred emblems of the Redeemer's passion, and over all of you he has watched as a faithful shepherd, desirous, above all things, that he might present you faultless before the throne. We are not surprised, therefore, that all should so deeply regret the sundering of those ties, that bound you together as pastor and flock. But, my brethren, if he were permitted to speak to you from his seat in glory, he would say, "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children." Why should we weep for him? His is the gain: he has completed his warfare, finished his course, and kept the faith, and now he is reaping the laurels of victory and glory above. Yes, my brethren, from those dark and surging billows that engulfed his body, there went forth his spirit, clothed in light, exclaiming, "*Victory, Victory, through the blood of the Lamb!*" His body sunk in the watery depths below, but his soul rose to the heights of celestial bliss, to bathe in the ocean fulness of heaven's joy. Weep not then for him. True, you will no more see him walk these aisles, or stand

in this sacred desk,—you will no more hear from his lips words to animate you on your Christian journey—no more will you see him spreading forth his hands, like Moses, in prayer, that you may be saved from your enemies. But while you deplore this, see to it that you do not forget that God is wise in counsel, and faithful in his dealings with his children,—that his chastening hand is laid upon you in love, and that he will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able to bear; but will, with every temptation, make a way for your escape. Treasure up in your hearts the instructions which your minister gave you, the warnings he addressed to you, and the consolations which he administered to your souls, and so live that you may be prepared to join him in that better land.

Most sincerely do we sympathize with his bereaved and sorrowing widow. Her loss is inconceivably great. She feels it to be so in the hidden depths of her soul. How can it be otherwise? The husband of her youth—the father of her children, so mysteriously and unexpectedly severed from her for ever! How afflictive the visitation! But we rejoice to know, that she is enabled, through Divine aid, to rest upon the promise, “My grace is sufficient for thee.” By faith she seems to hold communion with his enraptured spirit in its glorified felicity. It may be soothing to her to know, that thousands of prayers from ministers and people have gone up to heaven, in her behalf, saying, in all the tenderness of religious sympathy, and in all the strength of the Christian’s faith, “God bless the weeping widow of our departed brother, and bear her up in this season of overwhelming sorrow!” These prayers are recorded on high, and will be answered in the bestowment of those blessings, which she and her fatherless children so much need. She, I trust, will learn to appreciate more highly the power of prayer, and the sweetness of the promise, “All things work together for good to those that love God.” May the gifts of Providence, and the treasures of grace, be bestowed upon her and her little ones, in all needful plenitude, that when the trials of this life shall have passed, all may meet where the pain of separation is unknown, and where the soft hand of our Redeemer shall wipe all tears from every eye.

As might be expected, this *unfathomable providence* is peculiarly affecting to the one now addressing you.

Brother VERY and myself left St. John together, on Monday morning, as a deputation from our brethren here, to meet the anniversaries of our denomination in Nova-Scotia, with special reference to the

interests of Acadia College. On our way to Wolfville, we visited a number of friends, bowed at the same family altar, and mingled our prayers in the same bed-chamber. We conversed freely on a great variety of subjects, and we seemed of one heart in all that pertained to the Redeemer's kingdom. He spoke without reserve, and with deep emotion, of his religious experience, and of his entrance upon the work of the Christian ministry. I observed in his conversation and prayers, a spirit of more than usual solemnity. The evening before we separated, we were together in company with Brethren CRAMP, HUNT, HALL, and Professor CHIPMAN, until two o'clock in the morning, discussing matters relating to the progress of the College. I was exceedingly pleased, not only with his fidelity, but with his kind Christian spirit. He manifested an earnest desire to see the entire denomination in the Provinces united, *as the heart of one man*, to build up Acadia College, and to advance the Lord's work. On Saturday morning we took our leave of each other at Wolfville, saying, we shall soon meet in Liverpool. Alas! alas! *we parted to meet no more, until we meet in eternity!* If he had known what was in the womb of Providence for him, he would have charged me with messages of love, of sympathy, and of consolation, to bear to his beloved family and flock. Could I have penetrated the future, I should have endeavoured to strengthen his mind for the final struggle, by telling him of Christ, of the promises, and of heaven. But all was unknown to us. On the Wednesday following, while I was attending the funeral of a beloved friend in Wilmot, the painful tidings reached me. I hastened to Wolfville, and found the place clothed in mourning. The astounding event of Monday had filled all hearts with grief. We sighed, we prayed, we wept together. We felt that man should be silent, *for God was speaking*. Numbers were out searching for the bodies of the departed. Brethren RAND and GRANT were found on Wednesday, and KING on Thursday. On Friday the search was renewed, in the hope that we should obtain the remains of Brother VERY, in time to bring them over on Saturday. My own feeling was, that he must be found. I could not return, and leave him in his watery tomb. I must bring him, that he might be seen by his weeping widow and sorrowing friends. But God had ordered it otherwise, and we had to submit. All search was in vain, and I left with a feeling of *loneliness* and *grief* that no language can describe. The enquiry was constantly in my mind, "How shall I meet the stricken widow and the bereaved Church?"

This righteous Providence has been as a mighty moral earthquake, shaking the hearts of thousands and tens of thousands in all parts of these Provinces; and wherever the tidings have reached, all classes, all denominations, have felt the shock. Hearts unaccustomed to feel have felt, and eyes unused to tears have wept, and souls that never prayed before have cried for mercy at the foot of the cross. We doubt not but the alarming *deaths* of so many valued servants of God will be the means of infusing *life eternal* into the hearts of numbers hitherto dead in trespasses and in sin.

Finally, may I not appeal to the members of this congregation accustomed to worship here, and enquire, what has been the effect of this searching calamity upon your hearts? Have you not felt that it is the special call of God *to you*, to redeem the time? Some of us so regard it. It has cast a shade over all the transitory things of earth, and impressed upon us more deeply than ever the claims of eternity, and made us feel as if this life is of no value only as it is devoted to a preparation for eternal life. Do you all feel in this way? Hark! there comes from those rushing tides of the Basin of Minas a message of awfully solemn import. What does it say? Members of my beloved congregation, old and young—"Prepare, prepare to meet me in the judgment, lest I prove a swift witness against you in that burning day." Who speaks? Ah! it is the well known voice of Brother Very, that so oft besought you to be reconciled to God. "HE IS DEAD, BUT HE YET SPEAKETH."

APPENDIX.

EXTRACTS FROM A LETTER OF THE REV. RUFUS BABCOCK, D. D.,
OF NEW-YORK.

SOME RECOLLECTIONS OF THE LATE REV. E. D. VERY.

WHEN he was nearly thirteen years old, I entered on my duties as associate pastor of the first Baptist Church in Salem, Massachusetts, his native place. His family and connexions were attached to the congregation which I served, and I knew him as an intelligent, capable boy. Some four or five years later, he was an apprentice in the adjoining town of Danvers. At just that period it was too fashionable for a large class of young men in that vicinity to become or pretend to be *Universalists*. Many efforts, and with some appearance of success, were used to draw Edward into this snare.

I think it was in the summer of 1831 that a season of revival was enjoyed by the Baptist Church in Danvers, then under the faithful pastoral care of the Rev. J. Barnaby. I was invited to preach there one week-day evening. Young Very and a fellow-apprentice, with whom he was very intimate, sat in the singing gallery opposite me. God sent the word with power to the hearts of both of them. They retired to weep and pray, and mutually confess that the sandy foundation on which they had been trying to build their hope for eternity was insecure. The following day, his fellow-apprentice found some specious Universalist tract, to gloss over the plain and pungent Scriptural instruction which had made him tremble, and he went back; while Edward, at evening, sought again the house of the Lord, and heard another solemn appeal, from the appropriate words, "Remember Lot's wife." This decided his case, and very soon afterward, seeking the Lord with all his heart, he found the "good hope through grace" which ever after sustained and comforted him.

From this time he became a faithful and consistent disciple, honouring the Lord by a prompt obedience to His requirements. From that early period, for more than twenty years he has been enabled, by the sustaining grace of Christ, to keep his religious profession untarnished—to bear his lamp undimmed to the end of his course.

As soon as he could honourably procure his discharge from his employer, he returned to Salem, and fitted himself for entering College.

As I then occupied the Presidency at Waterville, it was not strange that he chose to enter there, and most vigorous and successful were his endeavours to store his mind with useful knowledge. By uncommon diligence and assiduity, he was enabled to accomplish three years' prescribed study in two years, and actually graduated with honour at Dartmouth College (he and I having both removed from Waterville in the meantime,) in two years and ten months from his entrance into the Freshman Class. If the fervour of his piety was somewhat deaenied by the too intense absorption of his mind in his Collegiate studies, it is but the too uniform experience under similar circumstances; and the honourable consistency of his Christian deportment was conscientiously preserved. He spent but one year in the Theological Seminary, and has since devoted himself, as a laborious, faithful, successful pastor, to four Churches, in each of which he has had seals to his ministry, and warm, loving friends, who will now deeply mourn the common loss of Zion in his removal.

It was in the autumn of 1845 that I passed a few days with him, during his settlement at Belfast, Maine. It gave me a better opportunity than I had before enjoyed to learn his habits of study, his method of pastoral labour, and daily intercourse among the members of his flock. With honest and unexaggerated truthfulness, I can testify that rarely have I found in any of our younger Ministers so much to approve, so little to be amended. The prudence, the fidelity, the laboriousness and the sterling good sense and solid ability which he demonstrated, were adapted to call forth many thanksgivings to God, and to suggest the desire—*O si sic omnes!* (Oh, that all were like him!)



