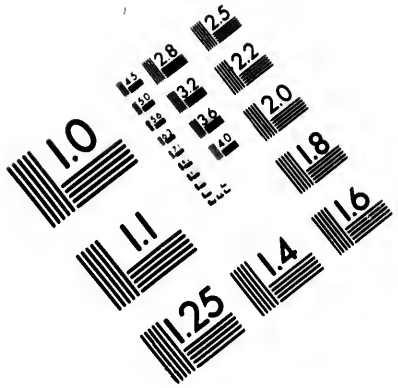

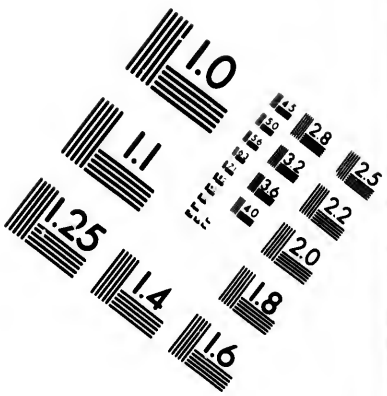

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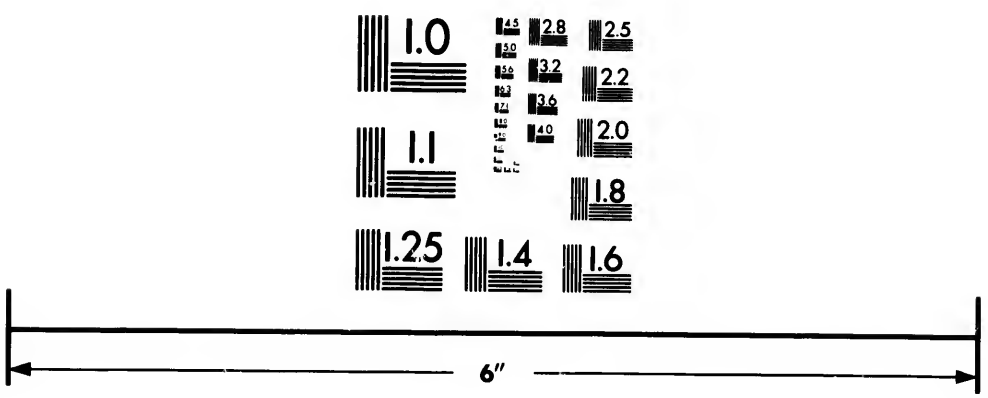

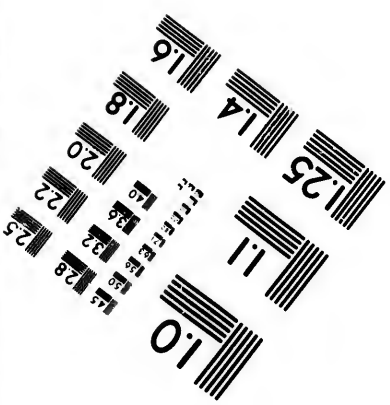

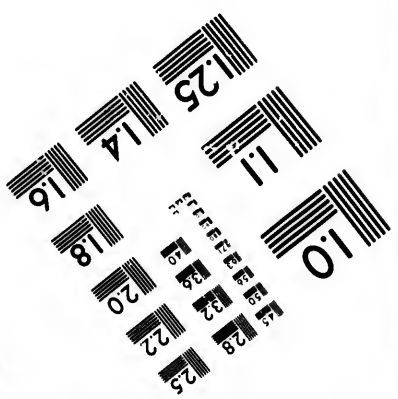

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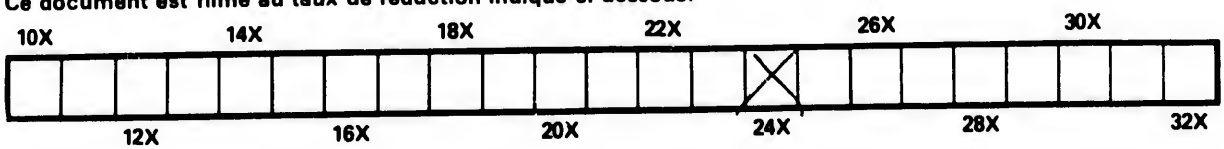

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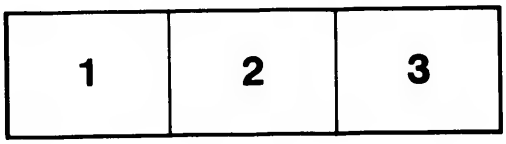

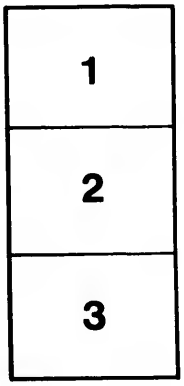

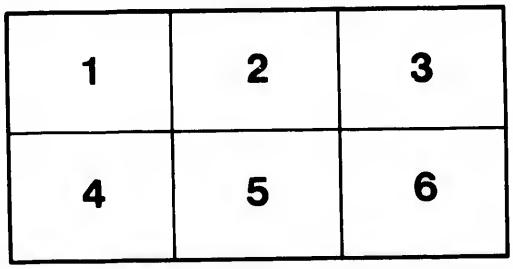

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EIGHTY-THREE YEARS A SERVANT,

OR

THE LIFE OF

REV. ALVAH SABIN,

BY

ALVAH S. HOBART.

Printed for the Author by
THE REVIEW PRINTING CO., CINCINNATI, O.
1885.

DEDICATION.

TO THE PEOPLE OF THE TOWN OF GEORGIA, AS A TOKEN OF GRATEFUL APPRECIATION OF THE KINDNESS AND ABUNDANT HONOR SHOWN TO "FATHER SABIN" DURING HIS LONG LIFE AMONG THEM, AND THE TENDERNESS WITH WHICH THEY RECEIVED HIS BODY AND LAID IT AMONG THEIR OWN BELOVED DEAD, THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

The Author has felt a hesitation in attempting this work, because of his intimate and dear relation to the subject of it. To avoid excessive praise on the one hand, and undue suppression of it on the other, is no easy task. Yet there was no other who was in circumstances to preserve a record, which by many was deemed worthy of remembrance. It was after much persuasion that Father Sabin consented to help in the work. In a letter of December 12, 1881, he wrote: "There are two things which I dread, viz: making my will and writing the biography you suggest. Yet it may be my duty to do both." At a later date he wrote: "If I have strength enough, I am willing to write to you a series of letters upon such topics as may seem best to me, or as you may suggest, * * * and this letter may be the first of the series." From the letters which followed, and from memoranda in diaries, the personal items of this history have been gathered. Acknowledgement is here gratefully made to Mr. O. S. Bliss, of Georgia, Vt., for accurate chronological data; to Rev. Anson Titus, Amesbury, Mass., for facts in connection with the family record; to Rev. J. G. Lorimer, for as-

sistance in searching the records of the church at Georgia. The writer has attempted mainly to give to personal friends of its subject a memorial volume. Yet it is thought that, by putting it into the great book market, some young men and some ministers of the gospel may find useful lessons.

CHAPTER I.

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

Rev. Alvah Sabin, the subject of this sketch, was born October 23, 1793, of Benjamin and Polly Sabin, in the town of Georgia, Vermont, on the farm which was afterward owned by him until about the time he left Georgia in 1876.*

The following account of his early religious experiences is taken from his own notes, written by request:

"I do not remember when I did not believe the Bible to be the Word of God. But in my earliest memory there lies a confused idea of the condition of the dead. I had no clear conception of the existence of the soul in distinction from the body. When about nine or ten years old, my thoughts were gloomy and kept me awake many times in the night. As the sun declined at evening, a loneliness would steal over me which made me sick at heart. My mother noticed this, and asked me about the cause of it, and when I tried to tell her, she advised me to say the Lord's Prayer, and to commit some hymns to memory, and repeat them. She had not at this time made a public profession of religion, but I now think that she had a secret hope. Up to this time I had received no personal instruction

* There is added to this work a chapter on the family history, to which the reader is referred for the account of his early influences and surroundings.

as to my duty toward God. I knew but vaguely what I needed to relieve my mind from its gloomy state. I had never heard of a Christian experience, nor a revival of religion, nor had I ever attended a conference meeting.

"After a number of years and without any consciousness of the process of my mind, I found myself resolved to live a Christian life, and to do the duties that are enjoined in the Bible. I was fixed in the purpose and habit of secret prayer. I had a time and place for it, and was punctual in the performance of what I considered to be my religious duties. I never was able, as many Christians are, to tell the time when my mind underwent a change, and to contrast my feelings before and after the change. Perhaps if I had been older, I should have been able to designate the time of my conversion more exactly. I then believed, as now, that, if one is a Christian, he has been born again; but there are thousands of truly Christian men and women who can not tell the day of their birth. I have often felt that it would be a great satisfaction, if I could fix the time of it, and be able to say, 'Draw near, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.' I had no fixed determination that I would not make a public profession of religion; but I shrank from it, and neglected to do it. But I found as I grew older that I was drawn into things which did not comport with a Christian life. I remember an effort was made to establish a dancing school, and I opposed it, and set up a debating society to counteract it, and did thus prevent some from attending it. But by degrees, I was drawn, by my increasing circle of acquaintances, into the whirl of youthful folly. I now

remember several times when I went out in the middle of the evening, and away from the house, so that I should not be heard, and cried aloud like a child; and then returned to the company, chastened inheart, and praying God to keep me from utterly falling away, and resolving that I would not do anything inconsistent with what I thought was Christian duty. Thus things went on, not for the better, but for the worse, until about 1815 or 1816, and I was 22 or 23 years old. About that time I attended a meeting on North Hero, and heard a Methodist preacher speak from the text, 'Quench not the Spirit.' He said, among other things, that we might quench the Spirit by smothering it, or letting it alone. This I took to myself. I was doing nothing to keep myself in the love of God. If I had a lively sense of the truth, it was not producing any fruit in the world. I thought of the process of hardening steel. They heat it and then plunge it into water, then heat it and plunge it into water again. Thus the hardening process was going on in my heart. I hardly dared pray for the enjoyment of religion, for it seemed to me it was a mercy in God not to let us be comfortable so long as we are disobedient. I remember times when some of my companions would leave the singers' seats to go to the communion, and they seemed to me to be embarrassed in thus separating themselves from their fellow singers. And then I thought to myself, O if I were in your place, I should be the happiest person in the world! About this time, Elder Roswell Mears, who had been preaching there for eight years, held a series of meetings, and seemingly without much result. He and Deacon Holmes were thinking to close them. I was pressed in spirit to tell them that I desired the

continuance of them, but I had become so accustomed to stand against my convictions that I did not say anything. The meetings, however, were continued, and at a meeting in the house of Nathanael Bowker, my brother Daniel arose, and repeated a long passage found in Prov. i, 24-33. This was the beginning of a great work. In many of the meetings, it seemed as if the foundations were shaken, and almost every one seemed to be saying, 'What must I do to be saved?' I was led to have a very debasing view of myself, because of my fearfulness of the world, and my unwillingness to suffer anything for Him who died on the cross for me. I then made out to rise and confess that, for a long time, I had been trying to maintain a secret hope and in a blind way had been doing the duties of a Christian. I had several times before this been greatly moved by such passages as, 'Whosoever is ashamed of me, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels;' or, 'Men do not light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a stand and it giveth light to all that are in the house.' It seemed as if these stood out on the pages of the Bible in bold relief. I saw by these that it was not possible for me to enjoy a peace of mind, so long as I was unwilling to take up my cross and follow Jesus publicly. I saw that I ought not to desire what God could not consistently bestow. And that to protract my omission of public duties after all the light that had been beaming around me for three months past would be tenfold more criminal than the omission of the same duties before the revival of the past winter. I saw that it was life or death with me, and I resolved to propose myself as a candidate for baptism and admission to the

church. In the month of February I offered myself, and prayed them to deal faithfully with me. After hearing an account of my long experience, and of my feelings during the late revival, and asking many questions, all but one brother, Paul Pratt, said that they thought it was my duty to go forward and be baptized. And accordingly with fourteen others, among whom were my mother and Anna Mears (my wife afterwards), and my brother Daniel, and Roswell Mears, Jr., and Joseph Bowker, and Paul Richards,* I went to the Lamoille river, at a place near Alvin Hydes, in the east part of the town, and there was baptized, the ice having been cut away for that purpose.

"After this, conference meetings were held frequently and I availed myself of the opportunity to speak of what the Lord had done for my soul, and especially to exhort any, who were cherishing a secret hope, to come out into Christian liberty and not conceal their light under a bushel. In doing this, I felt a peace of mind which I had not before known; but I had not that ecstacy which many others spoke of having. Several older Christians said to me, 'You do not seem to be as joyful as others.' I said, 'No, I have made and broken so many resolutions, that I fear that this last one will be like all the rest, and my fear of backsliding more than counterbalances the joy of my trembling hope.'

"I remember at one time, in the month of April following my baptism, I was at work in the barn, and I indulged in meditation on what had taken place during the past few months. I considered how that I had now put on Christ by baptism; I had joined the church;

*There were thus four ministers baptized at that time.—[Ed.

I had confessed my faith; I had subscribed to the covenant; yet I had not the joys of which I heard others speak. I finally came to the conclusion, that this state of mind was just what I had reason to expect, and that I had blunted my feelings by my long-continued neglect, and I ought to be satisfied with the consciousness that I had done my duty, and ought to bless God for his grace and mercy. I said to my Heavenly Father on my knees, 'If thou wilt give me strength to do thy will, and grant me grace to discharge all the duties I owe to my Savior and the church and to the world, I will cheerfully dispense with the ecstacies which others enjoy and follow thee through evil report and good report.' At the close of the day I went to conference meeting, and, as I had opportunity, I spoke of the goodness and forbearance of God. I attempted, also, to lead the meeting in prayer, and this I enjoyed; I also felt a cordial fellowship towards all the brethren. When the meeting was over, I went home alone. It was a beautiful evening. The sky was clear; the stars shone with unusual brightness; the air was balmy, and as I went along I fell into a train of reflection something like this: 'The Lord hath brought me through all my omissions of duty, through all my perversions of talent and abuse of blessings, to where I am.' And at the close of these meditations, I found myself in as happy a state as I ever realized in my life. I felt as light as a feather, the very heavens smiled over my head. I could have walked on eggs and not broken them. When I reached home and retired to bed, I could not sleep, but praised God for his wonderful works to the children of men. Afterwards, when this joy waned, I was able to trace it back to the covenant I made with God in the

barn, namely, that I would do my duty and trust him to fully satisfy my heart with joy, when I should arrive in the other world."

Such is the account of his beginning a Christian life. It is given quite fully, because of the light it throws on his after life. Observation shows that first experiences are the key notes to the religious activities. Luther was lighted into the kingdom by the text: "The just shall live by faith," and this text ever gave the drift to his preaching. He set it before the common people in all simplicity and earnestness, and thundered it in the ears of the Pope and his cardinals. It was the spur to his energies and the talisman to shield him from the bewitchments of the old habit of reverence to the Church of Rome. Charles Spurgeon met his Savior at the text: "Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved," and that sentence sums up his preaching. In all the rich variety of his fertile mind and the pathos of his sincere and Christ-like heart, he presents this one idea, "Full salvation for every man or woman who will look to God for it through Jesus Christ." "Whom God set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood," Rom. iii, 25, was the greeting which met Wm. Cowper as in despair he opened his Bible for help, and in recognition of the influence of it on his mind and life, he wrote:

There is a fountain filled with blood,
  Drawn from Emanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
  Lose all their guilty stains.

E'er since by faith I saw the stream
  Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
  And shall be till I die.

The same principle made the obligation of duty a living and a lasting one with Alvah Sabin. Although his life was not by any means destitute of great joy, yet the predominant feature of it was duty to God and man. In the long pastorate of half a century, there were many things to try the patience of a good man—many things which some would have considered sufficient reason to warrant a change of pastorate; but the ever recurring memory of that contract with his master, to do the duty and do without the joy, kept him patient and faithful where others would have been discouraged. There were times in his life—many of them—when the fountain of his rejoicing filled and ran over; and times when he was overwhelmed with a sense of his unfaithfulness, and with tears confessed it before his church. But, on the whole, his religious experience was more even than most men's. He never lost the love of life here. He had nothing of the pessimist in his makeup. Even down to the last week of his pilgrimage he regarded life as a joy, a great boon, well worth the living. He enjoyed seeing and hearing about the business of the large farm on which his son lived. His interest in all religious matters kept up to the last. There were no traces of that spirit akin to jealousy which is often with men who from the infirmities of old age are denied that prominence which they have formerly enjoyed. Although he was conscious that he was out of the notice of men, he had very little of the disposition to contrast unfavorably the present age with the past. He read in all his later years the leading newspapers of the Baptist and Congregational denominations, including the missionary magazines, and for many years was a regular subscriber and interested reader of the *Chris-*

tian Union. Thus he was informed about the new theology, and spoke his mind with freedom, but not with bitterness. In a letter of March 26, 1883, he wrote:

"I have all the periodicals that I can read, on all the subjects that are occupying the public mind. On the subject of religion there are some strange notions advanced. One has to shut his eyes and stop his ears, and think back twenty years, to be sure of his identity. They hold the jargon of creeds so charitably that they do not ask you to embrace their views; but, if you will extend your hand of fellowship to them, all is well. Now, if it is no matter which of the various views of atonement we hold, then it is no matter whether we embrace any of them. Entire credulity is ignorant infidelity. A universal fellowship is just equal to no fellowship at all. One may as well have no doors to his house, as to have them all stand open night and day. It seems to me as if the modern improvement of the Christian creeds is designed to throw out the duty we owe to God, and to retain only the duties we owe to men, and these duties to have relation to the happiness of this life only, without regard to the future state. It has all a tendency to make one indifferent to the duties of religion. But I console myself with the thought that the Lord reigns, and He is able to overrule these things for His glory, and the good of His children, and the advancement of His kingdom. I have myself all the comforts of this life which I am capable of enjoying. An old man is half dead while he is walking about, and all his enjoyments are limited as to number and degree. Like old Barzillai, we should be content to stay at home and be buried with our fore-

fathers in our native land. I can truly say, 'What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits to me?' "

He often said that he was willing to die and he was willing to stay here; but he would be glad, if it were the will of God, that he should be well while he remained. It was a source of thankfulness for him that he retained his faculties so well. He said shortly before his death: "I am glad to believe that what sense I ever had I have now." In another letter he wrote: "I can say, 'I would not live alway,' and sometimes I hope I can say, 'I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ;' but I can not say with Paul, 'for me to remain is better for you,' for my light is flickering in the socket and can not illuminate its own lampstand. I am not wearied with human life. I love God's beautiful, green, round earth as much as ever I did; my friends are dear to me as ever they were; my solicitation for the prosperity of Zion is unabated; but still the fact that all the Christian community, ministers and brethren who were my companions have passed over the river detracts from personal enjoyment."

There were those who thought that he was lacking in the emotional side of his nature. But this was not a just estimate; he was a man of usually tender emotion. He could not speak of his early faith without tears, and upon many of the deeper themes of the Gospel he could only talk with broken voice, and moist eye. The difference between him and others, was in the approach to his emotion. With many men, an illustration of truth, drawn from human life, moves more than the truth itself. With him this was not so. His habit of thinking abstractly made him so familiar with naked statements that he was beyond the need of the illustra-

tions. A man who loves children and is a favorite with them never lacks on the emotional side. A man with a quick sympathy for the needy is never wanting there, and these were characteristics of his. He was, as we have said, brought into the sense of adoption in connection with the word duty, and he early learned to kindle his joy with obedience, not with illustrations. This was also in keeping with his home training. His mother was not a professor of religion until he was a man grown, but no man had more thorough training in the ground principles of morality than was given in his home.

If his early experience gave the flavor to his religious character, his home training and his mental inheritance were in turn the roots of his experience. God always works in us, and through us; thus our experiences are varied as our mental traits and inheritances; thus also the church is not a body of men in spiritual uniform, but, like society, or the state, has rich variety; "diversities of operation, but the same spirit." The basis of his life was laid in deep, strong convictions of right and wrong. As in the Bible the Mosaic code of morals is first mentioned and after this the gospel, and, as in all cases of strong, well-balanced character, the moral training precedes the gospel activities, so in his case there was at the foundation a righteous purpose towards men. Those who knew him well remember how the impulses to fair dealing, and truth speaking, and frankness, and generosity were from the depths. They did not feel that he was fighting down covetousness, nor lying, nor stinginess. The writer spent the early years of his boyhood, when observation is keenest, in the home of this pure man, and he does not

remember any occasion when there seemed to be even a momentary struggle with deception, or covetousness, or evil purpose. The fountain was deep and flowed clear. He was an Israelite, indeed, in whom there was no guile.

The 25th of Matthew was his standard of duty. He was at one time called upon by a stranger, who stated that he was in debt, and had just money enough to pay; but he was anxious to go to the West and get him a farm. If he paid the debt, he had no money to go, and if he did not pay it, he would be liable to the charge of absconding. He heard of Mr. Sabin's kindness, and came to ask a loan. This was granted. In speaking of it many years afterwards, Mr. Sabin said it had been a source of gratification to him that his reputation was such that a stranger would feel confidence to ask such a favor. At another time he was harnessing his horse to go to Westford to preach, a distance of twelve miles. A neighbor came and asked the use of his horse to go to the mill, saying that his family was out of flour. Mr. Sabin quietly hitched his horse to the lumber wagon, gave the lines to the neighbor, and then walked to his duty in Westford.

In all his life he was an active participant in the political questions of the state and nation, and was thus brought into opposition to men of his acquaintance; yet such was the confidence of men that no one questioned his integrity and fairness. In his absence from home on political duties, he maintained his Christian activities. In Washington he was a grateful source of help to the pastors of the city, being always ready to preach in their stead. So much was he in demand that when some one asked him how he enjoyed the privilege

of listening instead of preaching, he replied that he had not done it enough to find out. In the later years of his life, he was cut off from the privileges of the church, by reason of infirmities, for a large part of the year; but with almost unbroken regularity, he maintained the family worship where he lived, and in this he found great satisfaction. He often spoke of it as a matter of joy to him. As the end drew nigh, he went toward it without either trembling or great joy. He had long regarded it as an event, to come; as one step in his progress only, and not the end of anything which was valuable. It was like going on a journey, expecting the family to follow soon. Or, to adapt the words of Bryant, he,

> Sustained and soothed
> By an unfaltering trust, approached his grave
> Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
> About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

The influence of his personal life in Georgia, has been for half a century one of the silent, but mighty forces of good. It has been felt by all classes and all denominations. One Alson Witters, not a member of the church, used to say, that when Elder Sabin came, he always felt "as if God had made 'em a visit," and all the town said, Amen! His life influence is a recognized antidote to infidelity; a witness to the truth which can not be impeached. Without comparing it to any other type of Christian life, it may truly be said, that its fruits fully justify the wisdom of Him, who through his mother and the surroundings of childhood, led him in the path as he did, and made the way of his journey a way of duty and a way of peace.

"Men die, but their words are left on record; their works remain, and their example survives." He who has made a record like that which we are now reviewing, he who has achieved a character like that which we hold up to the youth of the day, may well say when the supreme hour arrives, "I have fought the fight, I have finished the course: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge will give me at that day."

CHAPTER II.

EDUCATION.

He had good home instruction. But the opportunities for schools were meager. That he made good use of them is evident from the fact that he and his brother both became teachers in the district schools of their town, and he taught in one district seven sessions. It was a matter of frequent mention by him, that his early education was deficient. But a study of the records, which he, as clerk of the church, wrote, does not sustain the self-accusation. They are in good shape. But if this were so, he, by a life-long study, to a very large extent supplied the lack. His information was obtained under difficulties, but the mental discipline thus gained more than compensated for the lack of finish which the schools might have afforded him. He learned to read in the district schools of Georgia, taught by Archibald Hyde, the old collector of customs at Burlington, Vt. The book used was, Morse's Geography. This was a book without illustrations or maps, and he read it through and through until he was familiar with every word, though he had dim ideas of the location of the countries or cities spoken of. He acquired the habit, however, of reading with ease and pleasure. In a facetious manner, he once described the schools of his boyhood:

"The school-houses were log or plank houses, with broad open fire places, the seats were made of slabs

from the saw mill, put in with the bark side down, and held up by legs at the ends and one support in the center. The tables were rough boards, running along the side of the house, so that one could sit facing the wall, and write, or face the fire place, and study his lesson. The ruler, as it was called, was an indispensable thing. Why it was called the ruler, I do not know, unless it was because the ever ready ruler of the school, was used to enforce the rule of the school. They ferruled the boy who had whispered, or stuck a pin into the side of his fellow, or pulled the hair of the boy who sat before him, or threw paper balls at the girls on the opposite side of the room. The only restraint in all the nameless offenses which boys can conjure up was the ever ready ruler. When a boy was detected in any of these tricks, he immediately showed great sorrow—that he was detected. And when 'called up,' as the phrase was, he snivelled and winced until the blows were ended, and then went back to his seat, shaking his head at the boy who 'told on him,' as much as to say, 'I will give you a licking when we get out of school.' Yet they were very happy days.

"In those times such a thing as a steel pen was never thought of, much less the beautiful pliant gold pen with the ebony handle and gold trimmings. The native quill of the goose was the standing material, and, by the way, when it was made right, it was as as good a pen as was ever put on paper. But the slope of the sides, and the split of the point and the cut of the nib required a good knife and a mechanical eye. But oftentimes the quill would be a most indifferent one. You could hardly tell whether it was a quill or a

feather. Sometimes a boy would have a turkey quill, or even a crow quill. Happy the boy who could get the royal quill of the eagle. Then the knife might be an old jack-knife—hardly sharp enough to cut cold butter. The hero of the quill would make all possible preparation for the work, by honeing his knife on the top of his boot. Then the pen is made as perfectly as the best judge in the world could expect—under the circumstances—and the nib is cut off wide enough to write an advertisement on the side of a barn. When he came to use it, he found that the hair stroke was not very fine, but he would atone for this by writing out the whole page as fast as he could, and then brag over his neighbor that he was through first.

"Then the ink was not that perfect, uniform, limpid fluid of this day; but was a decoction, gotten up by the scholars themselves, made of soft maple bark, and sumach berries, and logwood. Sometimes it was thick and muddy, and sometimes it was too pale, and, as the word was, 'it won't shed good.' The inkstand was a manufacture of their own, made usually of pewter, but the odd and comical shapes were legion. These were filled with cotton or lint, to absorb the ink and prevent its spilling, if tipped over. The pen was put into the stand and drawn out by a side motion, so as to compress the lint and get ink on the pen. Yet there were as many good writers then as now, in proportion to numbers.

"There were not so many books as now. Few people took any kind of a periodical. The result was that they were very familiar with what they had. The scholars became good readers. And, as to spelling,

they were far better informed than they are now. The 'spelling school' was an institution of that region, and many schools boasted, that they had scholars who could spell every word in the spelling book.

"In geography, Dwight's was used after Morse's. This was written with questions and answers, and without maps. We had little idea of the places, but there were many who learned enough geography, to stay at home and mind their own business.

"At that time they had no books of mental arithmetic, but the lack was supplied by all sorts of mathematical puzzles, and by oral instruction. They did not go so far in arithmetic as they do now, but they thoroughly understood the four ground rules, and 'practice' and interest, and the 'rule of three.'

"Grammar was taught superficially, if at all. But we learned to communicate our ideas, so that all who wished to understand them could do so, and that is about as well as the learned can do in these days. One thing is certain, limited opportunities well improved are more beneficial to the individual than great opportunities unimproved.

"As for the fine arts, they consisted in good voices and comely faces. These were good substitutes for water colors, and organs and pianos. Fine boys and girls well brought up are the best specimens of the fine arts that the country affords.

"In Georgia as long ago as 1812-16, the schools were much larger than they are now and there was more zeal and competition than at present. The select schools that were kept up from about 1818 to 1830 were of the best character, and they told upon the minds of young men who have since then made their mark in the

world. The teachers were Mr. Rolph, Mr. Dodge, Mr. Calvin Pease, Mr. Wood, Mr. Blackman, Mr. Robinson, and several more of later date."

It will be seen from these memories of his that though information was not so much imparted in his day, yet discipline of mind was in some good measure secured. But the schools of that town in 1818-1830 were not the schools of his boyhood. He was 23 years old in 1816. His common school instruction was over. We shall see hereafter how the schools of the town were improved through his agency. He was his own instructor mainly.

He read trigonometry and astronomy quite thoroughly, and was familiar with the problems of geometry. In astronomy he found many terms that were Greek. In order to understand them he secured a dictionary, and made it his fixed rule not to pass a word without understanding it. And even if it took a half day to read a page, nevertheless it was carefully read. This work without a teacher was laborious, yet he said of it that as late as 1856, forty years after, when he attended a course of lectures upon astronomy in Washington, by Professor Mitchell, of Cincinnati, he could recall his former study, and found himself so in the possession of the terminology and general principles, that he could follow the lecture with ease.

When he was 14 years old, Rev. Roswell Mears became pastor of the Baptist church in Georgia (1807). He took a warm interest in the young lad, and, as they lived near together, the library of the pastor was often visited. The following years it was a habit of the young man to borrow a book and read it carefully, then make an analysis of it, and go down to the pastor, and try to

repeat the argument of the book in his own words. At first it was rather unsatisfactory work to both parties, but after a little practice he learned to grasp the salient ideas of a book, and his power of expression grew until that he could with remarkable clearness and accuracy give the substance of a volume. In this way he read "Burders' Oriental Customs," "Watt's Logic," "Blair's Rhetoric," "Edwards on the Will," and other works. A Bible dictionary was also quite thoroughly read after that fashion. Thus before he was a member of the church he was interested with the study of the literature of the Bible. This habit of analyzing the books which he read went with him through life. When he was ninety-one years old, the writer heard him give the skeleton of a work on the public life of John Adams as clearly, as if he was in an examination in school, and yet it was brought up in the ordinary discussion of books as we were looking over his library one day. Undoubtedly the logical faculty was strong in him by nature, but this culture of it made it a source of strength to him. In conversation it was notable that he discussed all matters in a systematic way. If he was asked a question, his answer would be divided into parts. If asked for reasons of anything, they would be given in the order of their importance. And yet there was no apparent effort to so arrange them. It was an instinctive habit of his to think logically.

After his mind was made up to enter the ministry, he at once became anxious about an education. But there were great difficulties in the way of his pursuing a course of theological training. He was 22 or 23 years old. He was not financially able to afford it,

though his mother was in favor of it, and Elder Mears, although not a man of the schools himself, was yet fully in sympathy with them. Yet the prevailing sentiment of the time was that if a man thought himself called to preach, he ought to begin at once, and trust God to supply the wisdom and power. When it was found by the brethren that he was determined to go to the theological institution, several objected, and charged him with departure from the gospel rule, and insisted that he ought to be suspended from church fellowship, until he abandoned the purpose. Of this he wrote in the following words, which are given not only to show the facts in the case, but to show the fair and kind spirit with which he viewed the matter:

"This was at a time when the policy of establishing theological institutions by Baptists was by no means settled. Brethren honestly differed in their opinions and the subject was discussed with warmth and earnestness. One party claimed that devoting several years of time to study after professing to have had a call from God to preach, was practically denying the special call to preach; that it was adopting the view of the Pedobaptists; and would lead to the practice of writing sermons, and reading them from the pulpit; and would convert preaching into a worldly profession, on the same level as the law or medicine. I think that every minister in the Fairfield Association was opposed to the plan of sustaining theological schools.*

*From the mention made of the encouragement which Elder Mears gave him to enter the ministry, and some seeming harmony of action between him and Professor Chase, I am convinced that exception should be made to this statement in the case of Elder Mears. He had felt the same reluctance to enter the work unprepared, and was the friend of Mr. Sabin through the whole time of the trial.—[Editor.

"The other part of the church took the view that a call to preach was a call to take a rational view of the whole subject. They said a young man or boy may be called to preach, but with his present age and knowledge of the scriptures, taking his whole life work into consideration, will he not do more good, and have more Christian influence, and be better able to meet sophistical arguments of infidels, if he devotes a portion of his time in his youth to the study of the Bible under the tuition of experienced, able and learned ministers, and the reading of the Bible in the tongues in which it was written, with all the light that can be thrown by oriental history upon the customs and peculiarities of the people to whom the revelation was made? They did not think that every minister should attend an institution. Like Paul, one may be learned in scripture before his call. If so, he is to sanctify his learning to Jesus, and devote himself immediately to preaching. Others may be converted later in life and in circumstances which render it inexpedient to attempt such a course. And all theological students should in their judgment as far as practicable, preach Christ during the time of their study." Such was the opposition he met. Yet he was not convinced that he ought to abandon either the ministry or the education.

When he was deciding the question of his duty to enter the ministry, he said that the chief obstacle was the thought that a white-headed and unexperienced boy like himself was incompetent to teach men and women older than he the things of the gospel. And to think of attempting it without more education than he had was a thing he could not easily make up his mind to do. Yet the way did not open for some time.

Meanwhile he was not wasting his time. Elder Mears proposed that the question of allowing him to "exercise his gift" as the church might have need, should be submitted to them. This was done and they thought it wise to do so, as the record shows:

March 27, 1817.—Voted to open a door for the improvement of the gift of Alvah Sabin in public, that we may judge whether it will be suitable to license him to preach the gospel in the future.

But a license to preach, in those days, was not granted without fair trial. We do not find any allusion to this case until the following record:

January 9, 1819.—Discussed upon the past improvement of Bro. Alvah Sabin in public. Voted, that they had been perfectly satisfied, and manifested a desire that he should continue in his labors.

Almost two years of "exercising his gifts," and then he fared better than his cousin, Joseph Ballard, who was remanded for a new trial.

He was engaged to teach school the winter 1816-17, in the "Ballard district." And he went to the St. Albans book store, kept by Judge Janes, and told the Judge if he would let him have a copy of Scott's Commentaries, he would pay him in the spring when he should have received his pay for teaching. This he readily consented to do. The price was twenty-five dollars, and he gladly took the books. For the kindness thus shown him he always retained a lively sense of gratitude. It was a snowy day in November 1816, and he was on horseback. When the Judge handed the books up to him he said, "Young man, you have a rich library that few enjoy." He carried them home on the pommel of the saddle, and his mother

came out and took them from his hand and carried them in. He used to recall the joy of that day He said that as the books lay upon the table they looked like the richest treasure he had ever possessed, and he resolved to make the best use of these precious volumes that he could. At this time Elder Mears was preaching one-half the time at Swanton. It was the custom to have a conference meeting on Sunday. And they asked Mr. Sabin to lead these meetings. He pursued his own course in doing it. He would select some narrative or parable from the scripture, read carefully the commentary on the passage, and look up the customs and figures that were connected with it, and then explain the meaning, adding such practical exhortations as were suggested. This he did for several months, and was so successful in it that the congregation did not fall off on those Sundays when the pastor was absent. But he was not satisfied to continue this work without further study under teachers. The summer of 1817 he went to the meeting of the Fairfield Association at Morriston, and while there became acquainted with Ira Chase, a son of Dea. Isaac Chase of Westford. He was a graduate of Middlebury College and was at that time a student in Andover Theological Seminary. Through the influence of Mr. Chase (who, by the way, was afterwards Professor Chase, of Philadelphia, and first President of Newton Theological Seminary), he decided to attempt a thorough course of instruction. He was made acquainted with Peter Chase, a brother of Ira, and together they planned to go to Burlington College. This they did about the first of September, 1817. They rented a room and arranged to buy their provisions, and hire

some woman in the neighborhood to cook for them. He found that to study in the way of the schools and recite after their fashion was a difficult thing for him, and he felt ashamed and dejected, but he continued the study three months. At that time it was evident he could not well meet the expense of a longer stay in Burlington, and he was obliged to return home. But he did not give up his study. He went to Gardiner Childs, Esq., an educated lawyer in Georgia, and arranged with him for private instruction. In this way he continued until spring 1818, though on account of many home cares in connection with the farm, the winter's work was not very satisfactory to him. In the spring, in order to get the benefit of school nearer home, he and Peter Chase planned to have one of the students of the college come up and start a "select school," as it was called, in Georgia, and thus enable them to board near, or at home. They secured the services of a Mr. Rolph. Mr. Sabin then hired an empty store at the "Center," and thoroughly canvassed the town for scholars. To help pay the tuition for himself, his mother took the teacher into the family to board, and also some of the scholars. The farm was rented and he took the charge of the business of the school. This was continued during the summer and the following winter (1818-1819). Out of this effort grew an interest which developed into the Georgia Academy. The summer of 1819 was spent at home in earnest preparation, and somewhat anxious expectation of the trip to the Seminary at Philadelphia.

We have already made mention of the discussion which was going on in the denomination about the wisdom of supporting theological schools. This had

been before the whole denomination. At a meeting of the "General Missionary Convention," held in Philadelphia in 1817, the matter was under discussion, and it is worthy of notice that the motive which was first in awakening an interest was the foreign missionary motive. Rev. Luther Rice, the contemporary of Dr. Judson, and perhaps the equal benefactor of the heathen nations, was in this country visiting the churches and exhorting them to missionary effort. He had himself been led to accept Baptist views by the study of the Bible in the original languages. He was anxious to get men to go as missionaries who could read in the original for their own instruction, and also translate from that into the languages of the heathen; but there was at this time only one school of higher learning under Baptist control. That was Brown University, at Providence, which had been in existence since 1765, but was known as "Rhode Island College" until 1804, and this had no theological instructors. It was necessary therefore to have colleges and theological seminaries to train the men for the foreign work. The interest in this work was thus the means of quickening all activities. At this meeting of the convention Dr. Furman, the President, addressed the body on the subject of education. The board was authorized when the funds for that purpose became sufficient, for it "to institute a Classical and Theological Seminary."

In July of the same year 1817, the Education Society of Philadelphia offered to the board their co-operation in the work. In August, 1818, Dr. Wm. Stoughton was elected President of the proposed institution, and Rev. Ira Chase, Professor of Languages

and Biblical Literature. The instruction was commenced in Philadelphia in a private house hired for the purpose. This institution was the first theological seminary, strictly so-called, among Baptists in the United States. It was soon moved to Washington and became Columbian College. To this seminary, born the same year that he began his preparation for such a school, and having as its first teacher of languages the man who had persuaded him to attempt the course, he went in December, 1819. He was one of the eleven who constituted the first graduating class in the year 1821.

He had for a long time been engaged to the daughter of Elder Mears,* and, before leaving for Philadelphia, they were married on November 14, 1819.

His journey to Philadelphia he described as follows: "I started about the 15th of December. I went by stage all the way. This was the first time that I had ever set foot in a public coach. I paid my fare from one stage office to the other until I reached Troy, N. Y. From there I paid to the Northern Hotel, New York City. About 4 o'clock p. m., a boatman rowed me over the Hudson to the Jersey side and there I took the stage for Philadelphia, which we reached at five in the morning. I stopped at the Stage Hotel on Market Street. In the morning I found Dr. Stoughton, and he sent me to Professor Chase's room, who showed me the house where the school was held, and there I found my friend Peter Chase. We had a class of twenty, and we went in two years over the

* An account of this estimable woman, in his own language, is given in Chapter VIII.

same course that was pursued at Andover Seminary. We were pressed forward as rapidly as possible, and none of us could boast great thoroughness. At the close of the course there was an examination in all the branches that had been studied, and an exegesis of some passage of scripture. That which I presented was on I. Cor. xi, 10: 'For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels.' I explained it as if it read, 'for this cause ought the woman to have the symbol of being under power,' that is, the wearing of long hair, because of the spies that enter your congregations to spy out your liberty in disregarding some of the customs of society. The paper was printed and may be found in the *Later Day Seminary* of that date. I received after my graduation an appointment from the Philadelphia Association as a missionary for three months in Northern Vermont and Lower Canada. Bro. Peter Chase and I sent our baggage to New York, while we went *via* Bordentown to N. Y., and thence by boat to Troy. From there sending our baggage, we started on foot. We walked the first twenty miles as quick as two good horses, but that night we took cold in a fireless room, and the next day my feet became sore, and I walked like an old jaded horse, but we had no money to pay for a ride. When we reached White Hall we took a boat to Burlington, and from there we walked home. The first house we called at was my Uncle Henry Ballard's. He took me in his wagon and drove to my old home, where I met again my mother and my wife, and a son about a year old whom I had not seen before."

This closes the account of his school days. If they were not all that he could wish, they were nevertheless

of great value and satisfaction to him. He was always a friend to schools, and a helper to young men desiring an education. His own children and his grand-children were encouraged to seek a liberal training, and if any of them failed, it was not through his want of sympathy, and as much aid as he could furnish.

There was one effect which his hurried course together with the enforced habits of after life had upon him. He was a thinker, rather than a reader.

Very few quotations found place in his sermons or conversation. He read, but what he retained was the substance, not the words. His library showed his peculiar habit. The books of reference were well selected, but not in great abundance. One author on a subject was sufficient. From him he could get the facts; the conclusions he made for himself. He knew men. He had a good memory of incidents, a clear conception of principles, and these furnished his tools for work. It may truly be said that he was not a learned man, but a wise and an educated man.

CHAPTER III.

ENTRANCE TO THE MINISTRY.

THIS embraces three steps: The revelation to him of the divine wish in the matter; the acquiescence of the church; and the formal ordination.

The Call.

He was one of whom it could be truly and without controversy, said, that "God separated him from his mother's womb" unto his service. And although he was not conscious of the direction in which the current of his life was bearing him, yet, to us at this day, its early movements are very easily traced. The eyes of his pastor saw the signs of a preacher in the tow-headed boy who took so much interest in the study of religious books. We have already noticed the fact that he had religious life several years before he was a member of the church. His reading was upon those topics which are associated with the scripture. When he was fifteen years old a man named Abel Laflin, who professed to be a Deist, boarded at the house of Mrs. Sabin. In the evenings at the fireside he was given to berating Christians, and asserting his deistical ideas. The boy took up the gauntlet against him, and spoke with earnestness of the Christian faith. He was able to silence his fellow workman, who was astonished to find so zealous a defender in one not professing to be a Christian, and said to him, "What business have you

with these arguments? You are not a church member." "Well," said the young man, "religion may be true if neither you nor I profess it. The world is wicked enough to need a revelation, and ought to appreciate it now that it has been given."

At another time his brother Daniel, who had publicly confessed his faith, fell into darkness. One night his mother and his brother heard him weeping aloud in his room. Upon questioning him he said he had been self deceived, and was now sure there was no hope for him. His mother talked with him but to no purpose; and finally told Alvah that he had better go down to Elder Mears, and see what he could do. So they went that night. Alvah stated the case of his brother to the pastor. And the good man attempted to show that the Spirit had not left him or he would not be troubled at his condition. This did not help any, so Alvah was moved to speak. He said, "Jesus came to save sinners and the chief of sinners; the difficulty is all on your part. By your conduct in not believing, you are limiting the Savior. Jesus said that all who will come to him may have the water of life freely." His clear ideas about the matter astonished the pastor. "How came you," said he, "to know these things?" "Why," said Alvah, "common sense would teach this to any man."

He used to delight in arguing questions of religion with imaginary opponents, and in preaching to imaginary congregations.

These things were treasured up by the fathers in Israel as signs which they understood better than the boy himself. And when at last the grace of God had won the mastery over pride, and the glad confession

was made in baptism, they began to suggest to him the duty of preaching the gospel. He then confessed that the matter had been on his mind. He said the work had always appeared to him as a noble work, but the qualifications were so high that it seemed presumption for him to think of undertaking it.

Some time after this the pastor broached the subject in a more formal way. To him he made the answer that he looked upon the work with longing, but his circumstances were such that it seemed to be out of the question for him. Not only did his want of education stand in the way, but he was unvoidably involved in the care of the family, his mother being a widow, and he being the oldest son. The pastor admitted that these were formidable, but said that there were special promises for special cases, and that we have a right to hope for strength equal to our day, and urged him having submitted the matter to the church, to take its decision as final. This he consented to do.

The License.

It was customary in that day to hear a young man attempt to preach before licensing him. We remember hearing of an instance which gives the spirit of the day. In the town of Westford a man asked for a license. The church heard his request, and then the pastor said, "Has any one objection to our giving this young man license to preach?" After a pause an old man arose and leaning on his staff said, "I have some objection. I don't believe in sending out every little, illiterate, windy crittur into the world to preach the gospel." Whether the results were any better in those days than they are now, we will not here dis-

cuss; but they certainly went through the forms of deliberation. Therefore Brother Sabin must be heard before it could be said that he was called to preach. Though they maintained a strenuous insistence on the divine call, they felt in duty bound to examine the young men to see that God made no mistake. For whatever might be the impressions on the man himself, they insisted that the ability to preach to their satisfaction was the final test in the matter, and not only in the matter of the call, but in the matter of preparation as well.

March 17, 1817, the coveted privilege of "improving his gift" was granted and not long after a day was fixed for the beginning. The notice was given out, "Brother Alvah Sabin will preach at the house of Brother James Ballard on Wednesday evening of next week." We give his account of the matter. "My thought was turned to the text in Luke xxii, 67, 'Art thou the Christ? Tell us! And he said unto them, If I tell you, you will not believe.' In my introduction I remarked that we have in the text a fair specimen of the spirit and manner in which worldly, and wicked, and hypocritical men investigate the subject of Christianity. They prejudge, and precondemn, and then use all of their influence to have their decisions sustained.

"Second, I remarked that it is not for want of evidence that sinners fail to believe the gospel. 'If I tell you, you will not believe.' The disposition of the heart has much to do with the belief of the mind.

"Third, repentance is succeeded by faith. When the heart is changed it has a faith that purifies it and overcomes the world.

"I closed with an exhortation to examine their hearts by the light of the divine truth and in view of the final day of retribution.

"Such was the line of my thoughts as I intended to present them; but before the day arrived, I cut my foot with an ax, and this, aggravated by my nervousness over the coming event, was so painful that I was unable to go at the time appointed. A fortnight after I did go however. It was a dark stormy night; but few came. For the first time I attempted anything in the form of a sermon from a text. In later years I preached from the same text, but not with a tithe of the excitement I felt at that time.

"But few remarks were made on the sermon in my hearing. Deacon Eggleston remarked that he never heard the text preached from before; he thought the discourse grew out of the text; and was all true. I had previously read the sermon to Elder Mears, and he had encouraged me to hope that it would be acceptable for a first effort. I did not read it to the people; but then, as for many years afterwards, I committed the leading arguments to memory and spoke freely.

"About a month after this, Elder Mears proposed that I should preach the morning discourse on the Sabbath. It was a pleasant day in April, and the house was more than full. I took for my text Psalm cxvi, 12. 'What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me?' In this sermon I used the word benefit in its most enlarged sense, including our creation and endowment with faculties of body and mind; the beauties of creation, and their adaptation to our wants and pleasures; the exalted position we occupy over the animal creation; the advantages of a civilized

land; the divine revelation that shows the moral law of God, and the mode in which he may be acceptably worshiped. Then I traced the growing clearness of the revelation after the fall of man, from the covenant with Abraham, through the Prophets on to the Messiah. Finally Jesus is the greatest benefit God had bestowed on the world, and that benefit is essential to the perfection of all the others. It is now offered to all who will accept it. Through the sacrifice of himself he has made it practical to pardon repentant sinners and still leave the law of God in as full force to restrain the willful sinners as if no pardon had been granted, and the pardoned sinner has no temptation to laxness because he can be pardoned.

"Many of the recently converted were there, and also of those who did not usually go to church. They were much pleased with the discourse, and all seemed to be edified. During the summer and winter following, I was asked to preach at Swanton, East Fairfield, Westford, Fletcher, and Milton."

Thus the principle which he used to believe in, viz: "The best evidence of a man's call to preach is that he can preach," or, to put the same idea in another's words, "If God calls a man to preach he calls somebody to hear him," did in his case confirm the decision of the church in granting him liberty to exercise his gift. From that time he never lacked a congregation. If men heard him once they went again to hear, and took others with them. The outline of his first sermons here given show that his mind while it was not disciplined to cling closely to one theme, but like all beginners, gleaned from the whole field of doctrine, was nevertheless a reasoning one. There was more than an earnest,

warmhearted exhortation. There was an effort to instruct as well; to move the will through the sense of obligation. One can see here the reflection of his own thoughtful experience.

This was in the spring of 1817. It was his intention at that time to preach the gospel. To get as good an education as he could, but to preach. This was the cross upon which he needed to be crucified. Elder Mears told him that the church was a school, and that by close application he could approach to the education of others. This carried the cross for him a little ways, but he was obliged to be nailed to it at the last. He came where he said, "I will preach, educated if I can be; but uneducated if I find it to be the will of the master. He calls me, and he knows my talent better than I do, and I will go into the work, and crucify my pride and submit my judgment to his wish." Yet while he thus went to the cross, we think that he went as the Savior did, in a strong faith that there was to be in some way a deliverance from it. A death it may be, but a resurrection also.

And the resurrection came. In the chapter on his education we have mentioned the fact that he met, at Fairfield Association, Ira Chase, who showed him the way to get his education. And that very year the school was begun from which he graduated. The two years intervening between this time and his going to Philadelphia, were spent between preparatory study and work on the farm. It was five years from the time that he became a member of the church until he graduated from the seminary, and was ordained. And four of these years were filled with study and preaching. He was not therefore destitute of preparation. It is

very doubtful—indeed, it is quite improbable—that the average young man now goes from the seminary with as good preparation for his work—that preparation in the knowledge of the word he is to teach, and the knowledge of men to whom he is to speak—as he had. His is in no sense a case of usefulness without education which should encourage any young man who may chance to read this volume to be satisfied with any but the rest of preparation for this highest of all callings, the ministry of the gospel.

Ordination.

We have stated in the chapter on education that he received, upon leaving school, a commission from the Philadelphia Association to preach as a missionary in Northern Vermont and Lower Canada. He entered upon this at once and spent three months in it. During this period the church at Georgia was considering the propriety of ordaining him. But this was not a wholly one-sided question. When he went away there were some who opposed his going, and in the two years that had elapsed the question of theological schools had been under constant discussion throughout the State. The lines were drawn sharper than before. Although he was not ordained he was recognized as so near to it that he was treated as a minister by many. Some of the brethren in the church thought that he ought to be disciplined. Even before he returned from Philadelphia the wiley opponents of the "preacher mills" began to prepare his reception. The records of the church contain the following item:

December 7, 1820.—After considerable conversation on the propriety of the institutions of the Education

Society established by the Baptists, voted that we do not consider it agreeable to scripture.

We do not repeat this record as a censure of their intentions. They were men of independent thought, and out-spoken loyalty to the scripture. At that time it was not a popular thing to be a Baptist. Many of those who were had come through great tribulation.

They had blazed their own way through the Bible and found great satisfaction to their souls in its rugged doctrines of grace and sovereignty. The party of oppression, the ruling order of the more Eastern States, from which many of them came, the defenders of infant baptism, the mutilators of the ordinance itself, were all associated in their minds with an educated ministry.

In a later day a great man whose noble soul was as well filled with the Spirit of the Kingdom of Heaven as any of whom we know, made the same mistake on another subject. The Hon. Gerrit Smith, noble advocate and defender of freedom, for a long time discarded the scriptures because he thought they were the bulwark of slavery. Most of the ministers whom he knew said that slavery was taught in the Bible. He mistook the opinion of the ministers for the true one, and therefore he said, "Then the Bible is of the devil." But in later years he was an earnest lover and teacher of it. He came to a study of the book for himself, and was convinced that it was not of the devil, but of the God and Savior of slaves. When he was able to separate the thing from its associations his mind cleared.

So these men associated the errors from which they had turned, and against which they felt bound to protest, with an educated ministry. It took years for them

to separate the one from the other. In an estimate of the men this must be remembered. But the view they held is an Ishmaelite against whom every man may raise his voice, and turn his ridicule.

In July, 1821, a Brother A—— brought the subject to the attention of the church in the following manner, as the record reads:

Brother A—— manifested that his mind was burdened with the church; first, for fellowshipping that which militates against both the precept and example of the gospel. Second, for inconsistency in so doing, having previously condemned the principles with which they now hold fellowship.

Bro. A—— being called upon to substantiate the complaint exhibited, then stated that the conduct of the church relative to Brethren Joseph Ballard and Alvah Sabin, in his view of the subject, was indirectly or implicity giving fellowship to the theological societies es tablished by the Baptist denomination, and the principle upon which they act in taking young men who in the judgment of the churches to which they belong, and in their own judgment, are called to preach the gospel, to give them other qualifications or further preparation, which principle and method the church considered contrary to scripture.

[*See records of church meetings, December* 7, 1820.]

The church took under consideration its doings as it respected Bro. Ballard, and decided against Bro. A——. Then took under consideration the doings of the church as it respected Bro. Sabin, and solved it by putting the following question to the church: "Do we by giving fellowship to one, as a gospel minister, that has been to, and favors a theological seminary, fellowship that seminary? The church answered, "Yes."

This seems, at the first glance, to be quite decisive; but there is on a second look another view to it. There were brethren willing to admit that such fellow-

ship of the men was also a fellowship of the schools as well, and who were willing to have that fellowship.

The next item of record shows that the flaw was discovered.

The question was put in the following form at the meeting of December 7, 1821:

Is receiving one as a gospel minister who has been through a course of study after being called to preach, and still approving of the same, a breach of the divine rule? The church answered, "Yes."

But with all this opposition there was no withdrawal of fellowship. He had discharged his mission for the Philadelphia Association with credit. He was preaching to the churches of the country with satisfaction. The people of his own church were not displeased with him in anything but this, as it seemed to them, dangerous heresy. The question was not a personal one, but a matter of doctrine. While the church was not willing to admit the principle, it did vote to ordain the man, and the council was called for the second Wednesday in September, 1821. The churches of Colchester, Swanton, Hinesburgh, Johnson, Cambridge, Milton and Westford were invited to send delegates.

This was a bitter pill for the opponents to swallow, and they complained so loudly that when the next covenant meeting came preparatory to the Lord's Supper, it was a question whether they were in the proper frame of mind to go to the table of brotherly love and fellowship. The pastor asked them if they thought the "difference of opinion was such that they ought to break fellowship." The question was put to each one individually, and the majority said, "No."

"Bro. Joseph Ballard then moved that we go forward to communion, and this was carried."

We are passing by some items and getting ahead our story, but we can not better relate the outcome of of this struggle than to do it in this connection. After the ordination, Mr. Sabin seems to have taken the matter into his own hands and we find this entry:

January 4, 1822.—On motion read the records of December 7th, and Bro. A——'s complaint of July 5th and December 7, 1821.

Brother Alvah Sabin laid the following motion before the church: "On reviewing the matter which has for some time past been a subject of altercation in this church, viz: whether it may be proper or improper to continue church fellowship with those ministers who have availed themselves of the advantages of a theological institution after being called to preach, we are of the opinion that the vote passed December 7, 1820, the complaint brought by Brother A—— July 5, 1821, and the vote of December 7, 1821, are not judicious; and tend to strife rather than godly edifying. Therefore we rescind them. After motion being seconded, it was carried by vote.

Afterwards five brethren were excluded from the church for stirring up strife about the matter, and again in the course of years received to fellowship.

We return now to the ordination. It was sixty-four years ago. There were infrequent mails and no railroads. The delegation came on horseback, or on foot. They stopped at the homes of brethren on the way. They came not as a form, nor as a kind of holiday task, but to seriously consider the propriety of ordaining a man to the ministry from which it would be considered a disgrace and an act of bad faith with his God ever to

withdraw while health and opportunity were his to continue in it.

They were not in possession of such prophetic sight that they could foresee the result of a council and have the programmes of ordination printed before hand. They were compelled to wait the slow process of an examination, and the decision of the brethren before the appointments could be made for the ordination services. The delegates met at the house of the pastor. A day was spent in personal conversation with the candidate. We have not been able to find any account of the examination. But we may be sure that it was thorough. Those who thought that a man ought not to try to learn anything after he was called to preach, but should "plunge into the midst of things" at once; and were so severely conscientious about it that they were disposed to suspend him from church fellowship until he ceased to try, were not the men to let him off easily when they had a chance to question him. We may be morally certain that some of them asked him to explain that waste of two years of the Lord's time in the schools of men. Others would test the young man, "who had been to the preacher mill." upon the question of "limited atonement" or "man's freedom." The man who had just learned something and wanted to show it was there. Equally sure are we that Alvah Sabin was respectful to all, and that the bulk of the council were men of warm hearts and clear heads, in sympathy with the great purposes of the gospel ministry, rather than occupied with the defense of some cross-eyed or near-sighted view of scripture doctrine. They were satisfied with his experience of grace, and explanation of doctrine. The next day, word having been sent

around to the church members and community, he was ordained. The services were in the old white meeting house at the "Center." Elder Phineas Culver preached the sermon; Roswell Mears offered the ordaining prayer; —— Butler gave the charge and Peter Chase the hand of fellowship. Thus his official life was begun. There was good reason to expect much. "But let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off."

CHAPTER IV.

PASTORAL RECORD.

For convenience of reference this chapter includes a short review of the previous record, and is divided into decades.

1793–1799.

Unwritten history of boyhood.

1800–1809.

At the opening of this decade he was a lad of seven. In this he always claimed that he was converted; and his common school life was mostly contained.

1810–1819.

This period was occupied with teaching school, and attending to home duties. In his religious experience, vain struggles to find satisfaction and rest of conscience by a secret service of the Savior prevailed; but in the last half he was led into an open confession of his faith, and to the knowledge that God had work for him in the ministry. The church gave him license to preach, and the close of the decade found him at Philadelphia in the theological seminary.

1820–1829.

After returning from school and completing his "mission" came the ordination. For a few months he

then preached as he was wanted, in Cambridge, Underhill, Waterville, Craftsbury, North Troy, Richford, Sheldon, Fairfield, and several towns in Canada. Out of this acquaintance came an engagement to supply at Cambridge one-half the time, and at Underhill the other half. This continued for a year.

"At Cambridge there was a church, but it had been at a standstill for several years. Good brethren were there, but a difference of opinion on some doctrinal point marred their union.

"They gave me a formal request to preach one-half the time for one year. This I accepted. Major Parker had a newly built tavern containing a large dancing hall which he proffered to the church on condition that I should preach there every other Sabbath. The offer was accepted, and we used it during the four years I was there, I do not know that he ever received a cent for it. In addition his family always gave me a dinner on Sunday and treated me very kindly. This was my first experience in preaching to a church statedly.

"The congregation filled the hall on the first Sunday. They came from all parts of the town, and some from Underhill, and Waterville. This continued all the time I was there. Several were added by letter and by baptism. The last year of my stay they began to build a new house of worship, and it was a beautiful one for the time. I afterward preached at its dedication. The President of Burlington College was there and I found that I was not altogether above the fear of man. This period of my preaching life was among the happiest.

"In the town of Underhill they had no preaching. There were a few Baptists, who had no house of wor-

ship. The Congregationalists had an old shell of a house, but no preacher. Bro. Ward, the "no-legged man," circulated a subscription to raise money to pay me for preaching in the old house. The people, without distinction of sect, subscribed, and all attended. This was continued for one year only.

"The second year I was at Cambridge, the church at Westford asked me to preach for them one-half the time. This I consented to do; and continued there for seven years—four in connection with Cambridge, and three in connection with Georgia. There were several influential brethren in this church, but it had been without a minister for some time, and was in a low state. They promised me $50 for half the time one year; but as the congregation increased they doubled, and tripled, and quadrupled it of their own will. When I first went there the meetings were held in a little old school-house, southeast of the present meeting house. They made slab seats and set them around the house outside for the people who could not get in. These were covered over with a roof of boards. Then I stood at a window to preach, so that they could all hear. In winter the meetings were held in the south part of the town in the 'Stewart school-house;' and at the 'Chase school-house' in the north part of town.

"In the spring of the second year (1823) the question of building a meeting-house was agitated. It was proposed to unite with the Methodists and each occupy it half the time. All subscribed; a commendable zeal was manifested, and it was pushed to completion. It was so far advanced in the fall that on Sundays we swept back the shavings, and made rude seats, and held our meetings there. I would stand on a workman's bench,

and all the people could see and hear. We had many good meetings in this way. Not long after the house was done I proposed to the congregation one Sunday morning that we have a conference meeting. The result was that great freedom was taken, and before I was sensible of it the intermission was gone, and the time for the afternoon service was expired. So I dismissed the congregation and did not preach myself.

"From this time a revival commenced, lasting through the winter and spring (1824 and '25). I baptized between fifty and sixty. The Methodists as many more ; and the Congregationalists many ; but how many I do not know. The church became strong and a good society assisted in the support of worship. In this place I preached for seven years. My family lived in Georgia excepting a year at Cambridge and I rode to Westford every two weeks to my duty. I made it a point to stay at different places at different times, so I slept in almost every house occupied by members of the church or the society. The church had a commendable degree of Christian fellowship. The congregation was uniformly good.

"One instance showing how anxious the people were to be at the church is worth mention. Deacon Jonas Hobart lived about four miles from the place of worship, and the road lay over a small mountain. His father and mother lived in a house near him. They were both over seventy years old, but were uniformly at meeting. They made the journey in this way : One of them would take the horse and ride to the top of the hill, while the other walked. Then the one who had ridden would hitch the horse and go down the hill on foot. The one who had walked up the hill would

ride down. After church they reversed the order, and so went home.

"During the last two years I was there the Baptists bought four acres of land adjoining the meeting-house, and built a good two-story brick house on it for a parsonage. It was done as I suppose with the hope that I would move my family into it, and thus become the permanent pastor. But circumstances arose which made it inexpedient for me to do so. In 1825 Elder Mears, of Georgia, was in so poor health that he could not preach all the time, and it was proposed that I should leave Cambridge and preach at Georgia one-half the time."

There are some intimations scattered through his writings that he had from his first thought of the ministry, a dim yet constant idea of being pastor there. It was never an ambition; but one of those ever present tendencies which do not disturb any relations, but whenever there is a decision to make, enter into the scales to decide it. In the chapter on the "*Gates Affair*" will be found the strongest expression of it. He said that the events of that time had been a sort of inducement to remain in that town and form whatever character he did form, in the face of those events. How well this was defined in his purposes we can not tell at this day; but it had its influence in leading him to leave Cambridge, where he was doing so well, and go to Georgia. From that time, therefore, he was at Georgia and Westford. In 1828 the Georgia church gave him a call to become the pastor, in place of Elder Mears, who had been there since 1807. This was gladly accepted, and henceforth his home, work, and heart were with that church. The close of this decade found him there, as did that of four others.

This brief narrative, like scripture records, only indicates with dotted lines the course of the history. There is much to be read between the lines. And to do this one must be more familiar with the surroundings, than many of the present generation may hope to be. Yet some things can be seen. The church at Cambridge was in a weak condition when he went there. He gathered a large congregation, gained the ears of the unconverted, and the new hope kindled secured the building of the meeting-house.

At Underhill the whole community was moved, and for the year were united in him.

At Westford there were things which do not appear in his letters, which made his work difficult, and at the same time gave him opportunity to show his wisdom and prudence. There was, as in many towns of Vermont, a meeting-house built by the town, to be used by the denomination which was in the majority. This was the Congregationalist. The Baptists, if they used the house, must use it when they were permitted by the society. They asked permission to use it every other Sunday, when it was unoccupied. But just at that time there was some one among the Congregationalists who had not only a dislike to Baptists, but also the influence to make his dislike felt. And it was voted through his manipulation of the meeting that the Baptists could have the house whenever it was not in use, *except Sundays*. This was the opportunity to make a bitterness not easily removed, but he simply said, "Let us go into the school-houses." Then he preached in all parts of the town week nights and Sundays. He made no allusion to the matter, but attended to his Master's work. The result was, he made the acquaint-

ance of the whole community, and by his wise and kindly spirit showed them that the Baptists were to be neither feared as heretics, nor despised as fools. This unkind act was the means, indirectly, of gaining for him a hearty support in building the meeting-house. When he left, instead of a church without a house of worship, and the town church closed against them; there was a strong church, a large and appreciative society, a good house, a parsonage, and four acres of land.

There are other evidences of the esteem in which he was held. In 1824, a senator was to be elected from Vermont, and the party lines were closely drawn. It was thought that Mr. Sabin, who, though he was of another party, would for friendship's sake vote for Mr. Van Ness; and at the town meeting, without any consultation with him, and without even his knowledge and in his absence, he was elected to the assembly. But they were disappointed in his vote and he was dropped the next year. The year 1826 he received the honorary degree of A. M. from Burlington College. After 1827 the mysterious disappearance of Wm. Morgan made the question of Masonry a prominent one. And as there seemed to be a moral issue involved in the case he was at once identified with the movement against Masonry. His ability was such that he was called to lecture on the subject in behalf of the churches. All these things were giving him acquaintance and prominence.

It would be an interesting and very profitable study to read the sermons of those days. But the sermons which hold men together in school-houses and in unfinished meeting houses are not written beforehand, nor likely to be reported by stenographers. They come

from the heavens like the dove of Bethabara; they utter their voice and are gone.

There is one thing noticeable in the records of this time. There is a conciliatory and kindly air about them. And church records are, like the Books of Chronicles in the Bible, more records of evil than of good. Only the eddies of trouble appear, while the quiet current of deep joyful piety goes by in silence and unrecorded. Yet there are lessons in church records. Before his pastorate there is a frequency and a sharpness to discipline which suggests that they had not much to do but dig the motes out of their brethren's eyes. But in this decade a change appears. There is a recognition of personal rights, and personal weaknesses, and, marvelous enough, a spirit of confession on the part of the church towards others.

Several brethren under the discussion incident to the education of ministers (see Chapter III) had been excluded. One might not be surprised to find that a feeling of bitterness had remained in his heart towards those who had sought to exclude him from the church because he chose rather to cultivate his mind in a seminary and rank with preachers, than rank himself with Baalam's ass, by opening his mouth for the Lord to fill it, after the maxim of the times. In 1824 a resolution was recorded, acknowledging that the church was "too hasty in withdrawing the hand of fellowship," and later the following letter was sent to one of the excluded members:

The Baptist Church in Georgia to Sister ———:

The difference which troubled the church sometime since is doubtless well remembered by you. A separation took place and the hand of fellowship was with-

drawn from you among others. But upon a more mature deliberation the brethren considered that they were going too fast in withholding this hand. They have received others into fellowship who were in the same situation as yourself, and feel desirious to do all in their power to heal the breach that was made. And as regards yourself, we rescind the vote that laid you under admonition, and invite you to take your place in the church.

1830–1839.

This was a decade of great activity. There were questions in the public mind which caused much agitation. Churches were divided and sometimes broken up by them. The anti-Mason movement was in full strength. As the case presented itself to many of that day, it was evident that a large and influential association of men was to some extent involved in the kidnapping of one William Morgan, of Batavia, N. Y., and his probable murder by drowning in the Niagara river. And those who did not have any hand in the foul crime were thought to be indifferent about having the real murderers brought to justice. A fuller account will be found in the chapter on his political record. It is enough for this place to note that the church in Georgia took the matter into consideration. The record reads:

1830. March; first Saturday.—Meeting opened by prayer.

1st. Voted to appoint a committee to draft resolutions on the subject of Masonry, to present for the consideration of the church at the next meeting.

2d. Appointed Elder Mears, Elder Sabin and H. H. Hale committee.

There is an air of deliberation about this, which shows wisdom.

The second Friday, March, 1830.—Church met pursuant to appointment. Called on the committee before mentioned, and voted to adopt their resolutions on the subject of Masonry, as follows:

1. *Resolved*, That in our opinion the secrets and principles of Freemasonry are substantially before the public.

2. *Resolved*, That in our opinion the ritual of the fraternity is directly opposed to the Christian religion in its oaths, penalties, ceremonies, offices, and in its associating professors of religion with men of all religions and men of no religion in one brotherhood. And that its very secrets can but excite the jealousy of a free people.

3. *Resolved*, That in our opinion any member of the Baptist denomination who continues to adhere to the principles and practices of Freemasonry has sacrificed his right to membership, and, after due forbearance and gospel measures to reclaim, ought to be expelled from the church.

If these resolutions seem harsh to us, it must be remembered that the question was at that time, as it appeared to them, the question whether a Christian ought to be associated with a body of men bound by penalties terrible unto death, and which some of the order were disposed to carry out.

The clause relative to associating with men of all religions in a brotherhood was one which was not the outgrowth of the Morgan case alone, but which grew out of the general principles of the gospel, as they understood them.

The matter caused some trouble. In the next October a "letter of admonition" was voted to Bro. D—— upon complaint that "he still adhered to the practices and principles of Freemasonry." And in December the hand of fellowship was withdrawn.

In April, 1831, a meeting was called to consider how sister churches should be regarded who adhere to "Masonry," and the following resolution was passed:

Resolved, That, as we have considered that adhering Freemasons have forfeited their standing in the Baptist church, and that as other churches of our order are retaining them in their communion, we feel in duty bound to suspend our communion with all churches so long as they hold fellowship with Masonry.

Perplexing questions arose also in regard to the relation of Baptist churches to other denominations of Christians. There was no authoritative standard of faith or practice. He was familiar with the "Philadelphia Confession," but it had not been adopted by the church. And there was at that time too much fear of "standards" to allow its adoption; though they would consult it as an expression of the views of others.

The Baptist position was in some respects then as now anomalous. The scripture gave to them no deliverance directly upon some matters; and they were compelled to make the application of principles for themselves. Scripture is plain as regards the practice of the apostolic churches. But we have questions arising out of certain later departures from the apostolic example, which are not even supposable in apostolic times. And to adjust our relations to these semi-obedient disciples is a task for reason and charity to attempt.

The church at Georgia was formulating for itself statements and rules arising under these circumstances. The Baptist churches who gave shape to the London Confession, in 1689, and those in America who in 1742 had adopted the Philadelphia Confession, thought the ground all over and made their plain deliverances.

The Baptists of New England solved the problem in the same way. Those of the Southern States, late awaking from the lethargic influences of slavery, are just now puzzling their heads over the same question. It is the old conflict of forms with spirit: of ritual with worship: of law with prophets. A conflict in which nothing but a loving and tender bravery in defense of God's truth will guide men safely through. But one which we must face somewhere in our course of Christian education.

The first question raised was in the matter of Communion. Ought the church members to go to the Lord's Supper with other denominations? The final decision is recorded as follows:

Voted that the church give Sister ——— a letter of admonition for communing with the Methodists.

Later, letters were refused to those wishing to unite with other denominations on the ground that by so doing they were "violating their covenant obligations with the church;" and were also "countenancing error."

In the matter of what were called "spurious baptisms" the action of the church was in accord with the present views of "Landmarkers." A meeting to "consider and deliberate" on this subject was called and the the following action taken:

Resolved, That it is inexpedient, and unscriptural to receive to membership persons baptized by others than regular Baptist ministers.

Councils of Baptist brethren met with this decision concerning their authority.

Elder Phineas Culver had been silenced by a Council for some alleged heresy in regard to the Sabbath. The

church at Georgia (and we may presume other churches) was led to review the action, and this is the decision:

Resolved, That we are of the opinion that the Council proceeded contrary to the rule of the gospel in arrogating to themselves the authority to silence the said Culver without the authority or consent of the church of which he was a member.

Resolved, That, as we learn that the sentiments of Elder Culver in regard to the Sabbath question are the same as those of the church to which he belonged, we shall consider him as a regular minister of the gospel.

In 1833 there had become a more seated opinion upon these matters, and a statement of principles is given by submitting questions for church action, the record reads as follows:

February 20, 1833.—Church met pursuant to appointment and called on committee of November, first Friday, 1832, to report.

Voted to accept the report of the committee as follows:

1. Is it consistent to hold communion with churches who receive and retain members who hold to principles and practices for which this church would feel themselves bound to exclude members?

2. Is it consistent with gospel order to hold connection and correspondence with an Association of churches, which holds churches in its connection with which we can not commune at the Lord's table.

3. Is it consistent to ordain men to the ministry, and baptize men into the church, whom we could not receive to communion?

4. Can this church receive and employ a minister as an administrator of the ordinances who himself has not been baptized by a regular gospel minister, and maintains or contends for such baptisms as valid?

5. *Resolved*, That this church has by former resolutions answered the first query in the negative.

6. *Resolved*, That we answer the second query in the negative.

7. *Resolved*, That we answer the third question in the negative.

8. *Resolved*, That we dismiss the fourth query for the present.

Through all these questions he at least guided the church without serious divisions. His own views may or may not have been expressed. He was not the man to rebel against the action, if he did not agree. He would trust to the results of long-continued teaching to change the opinions which seemed to him erroneous.

This decade was also the time when the abolition of slavery was a question of earnest and sometimes bitter discussion. The Abolition party was conceived, though not yet born. There were societies for promoting the discussion of the matter, for the distribution of tracts, and the formation of public opinion. The next decade was the time when the feeling took shape in a party pledged to the overthrow of the devilish system. From his earliest boyhood he had been a hater of it, and as he grew in the grace of God and in a clear sense of the evils of the practice, his whole soul was on fire with zeal to remove it from the nation. Yet he was not in favor of the Abolition party. But in those first years of the agitation he preached with power against it.

This was also the birth decade of the temperance movement in Vermont. Like all such movements, the source of its power was in the personal abstinence of the masses of men, and this was cultivated by the churches. They are "the light of the world."

In 1830 this resolution is reported by a committee, of which he was chairman:

Resolved, That we approve of the objects of the A. T. S. (American Temperance Society) and will second their views by exerting our personal influence in carrying forward the reform.

2. *Resolved*, That we will refrain from the use of ardent spirits for ourselves and our families, except as a medicine.

3. *Resolved*, That in our opinion it is highly improper for a professor of religion at this time, with all the light we have on the subject of the practicability of entire abstinence and on what was once called a "temperate" use of ardent spirits, to use it, except as a medicine.

4. *Resolved*, That it is our sincere desire that all our brethren and sisters would adopt the principle of entire abstinence with the above exception.

Such work as this throughout the state prepared the way for legislation.

The State Legislature at first attempted to restrict the trade by license; but this was found, as it always is, to be only a legal defense for the better class of saloons, and to have no real efficiency in stopping the use of alcoholic drinks. After much effort, the Maine law, as it was called, was enacted and the sentiment of temperance—that is, the habit of total abstinence—was so generally cultivated, in response to the preaching and lecturing, that the law has had a good degree of efficiency ever since. It was his habit to preach on the subject. He always did it with fairness and kindness to men, however he might hate the evil itself.

In addition to this, he was very apt in bringing to notice the evils of the drinking habit by illustrations. It has been said of Dr. E. G. Robinson, that when he was pastor in Cincinnati, the question of slavery was shut out from the pulpit by a vote of the church;

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but he used illustrations from the condition of the slave and told anecdotes of their religious experiences which were penetrating the minds of his hearers as the sun goes through the ice, melting all the way through, so that he was really a mighty preacher of freedom. With a similar wisdom did Father Sabin fill his hearers with the terribleness of drink and blessings of soberness.

When we consider that these political themes were not merely questions of governmental policy, but were subjects on which the conscience of every Christian ought to have a decided deliverance, we see that there was just occasion for him to preach on the topics of political interest: and giving time to civil affairs, was not leaving his legitimate work as a teacher and preacher of that gospel which tells of the sacredness of human life, of liberty, and of sobriety.

In 1833 (January 20) his wife died, leaving him with six children, the oldest of whom was about 12 years The tenderness of his love for that wife and the sweetness of her memory to him we can not better record than by referring to the fragment of a record from his own pen, which is added in a chapter near the end of this book.

He afterwards married Miss Sarah Marsh (November 14, 1833), with whom he lived until 1874, when she died childless at De Kalb, Ill., with his daughter Anna. She was an energetic woman, who added not a little to his help in supporting a family on a meager salary. If at times she seemed severe in her judgments on him, she had some reason; for by the scarcity of means the woman of the house is sorely tried. Her carefulness of his wants is well indicated by a remark of his after

her death: "I have never been without buttons nor lacked a clean shirt."

In the year 1854 he was called upon by the State Convention of the Baptists to go as its agent to all the churches and enlist them in the missionary work. This was a service taking the greater part of a year. We give his own account of the work:

"I began my labors on the 4th of December. My pay was to be one dollar a day and my expenses. There was no railroad in the state. I furnished my own horse and saddle. My trips were arranged so that I could take a circle and be gone about a month at a time. Rev. Mr Downs (the maker afterwards of Downs' Elixir) was engaged to preach for me at Georgia. I visited every town that had a Baptist church in it and preached as often as there was a chance. At every place I stated my mission and gave opportunity for people to contribute. The sums were usually small, but there were many of them, and the total was larger than was generally received. I have never heard that the Board was not satisfied with my success. I can say with great satisfaction that I was cordially received by all the brethren upon whom I called, and my lectures were as well attended as I could expect. And here I would say with emphasis that in the course of my travels I was often invited to share the hospitality of brethren of other denominations, and I found them as kind and affectionate as they could be to one of their own ministers. In many cases they paid as liberally to my object as did my Baptist brethren. Their kindness left an impression on my mind that has never been effaced. This was especially true of the Congregational people. In October I closed my work. It has

been pleasant to me and I thought was useful to the cause. I gave my account to the Treasurer, Mr. John Conant, of Brandon, and surrendered my agency. I had expended ten dollars in the year. My compensation was small. My farm meanwhile was poorly cultivated, and I was poorer at the end than at the beginning of the year: but it gave me a rich opportunity to get acquainted with my brethren in the ministry, and other Christians whom I learned highly to respect."

Among the incidents of this mission the following will reveal some traits of the man better than any attempt to state them:

"At Brownington, when I arrived, there was a meeting of the Freewill Baptists in progress. I went to it in company with Bro. Baldwin. We found that there was to be an ordination. The services were in a barn. A platform was built at one end for the preacher and the council to sit upon. I went up to my place by means of a ladder. The manner of preaching was a new one to me. It was the old New Light, sing-song method, brought down from a hundred years before. When preaching the minister had a nasal twang to his voice which he never had in other conversations. His sentences seemed like measured blank verse; and when the sentence lacked its measure, the deficency was made up by the words 'ah—hum, ah—hum.' The praying had the form and tone of chanting, and had to my ear a pleasant music.

"I attended several meetings, one of them in a school house. The preacher asked me to sit with him and I consented. As he waxed warm in his discourse, he became emphatic in his words and brought down his hand repeatedly on the top of my head. So for once I

had the double privilege of having the truth poured into my ears and knocked into my skull. I preached for them several times, and was treated with brotherly kindness.

"At another place was a Brother Michal, a colored man from the West Indies, who had been a slave. With him I held a meeting and with great profit. At one place we stopped for dinner, and the man of the house asked if he could be excused from attending, saying that he had hired three yoke of oxen to plow, and could not have them at any other time. Brother Michal said that he should need to take a little time to consider the matter. 'But', said he, 'if it had been five yoke, we could have decided it now.'"

In 1837, came the great financial panic. By the concurrence of sundry causes, among which were the vast importation of foreign goods, the increase of trade upon borrowed capital, unparalleled speculation in the public lands, the failure of the wheat crop, the removal of the deposits of public moneys from the United States Bank, one of the most disastrous and wide-spread panics swept over the country. Following this came a great revival of religion. As men saw all that they had in this world's goods vanish, they turned with a new interest toward the riches which "moth doth not currupt nor thieves break through and steal."

1840–1849.

A country parish like Georgia gives in its regular work not much of the unusual to break the monotony of a record like this. The men who go from one field to another, and form new acquaintances, and meet new difficulties have a record of trials and victories that is in-

teresting to those who come after. But the man who stays in his field, who by dint of study, and patience; by the exercise of great forbearance overcomes troubles to which others yield, has a tame history to write. But it is not so tame to live.

One of the oldest pastors in our day, in New York city, said to a young man who was congratulating him on his long pastorate: "To you it looks very easy, but there are times when we hang on with our teeth and nails."

In those days the first flush of success was over: it was demonstrated that he was a man, not a boy. He had used up the delight with which a young preacher studies and presents the doctrines of the gospel for the first time. To use the term reverently, the "romance" of the work was gone. It was now the daily duty of a "good soldier of Jesus." Long acquaintance with men was giving him new and not always delightful views of humanity. The true nature of his own heart was coming to his sight. Those deeper and subtler truths of men and of the Bible were being mastered. He was passing from the enthusiastic young man to the estate of the veteran, winning the confidence now of those cautious and conservative leaders of others who "lay hands suddenly on no man." Could we have his heart history we should find abundance of material for biography. But that was not written, and we are facing the even page of ten years' preaching—a decade of exhorting and persuading men to be reconciled with God. Not that its glory is dim. No year of preaching is without its glory. But there is no special glory. The evenness of his life was, however, broken by his political duties, but the pastoral work

went smoothly on. Every year but one of this decade he was in the legislature, or upon the bench as Assistant Judge of Franklin county.

1850-1859.

Another decade of steady work, but broken by four years' absence from home. In 1852 he was elected as Representative in Congress from the Second District of Vermont, and on that duty he was absent four years, except during the summer months. In his absence the Rev. Eli B. Smith, D. D., then President of the New Hampton Literary and Theological Institution at Fairfax, was a most acceptable supply for the pulpit. Dnring the summer Mr. Sabin preached, and one summer there was an extensive revival among his people.

During this period there was a change in his habit of preaching. Hitherto he had been deterred from reading his sermons by the fact that he could not read writing as readily as was necessary for him to do in the use of a manuscript.

But his experience in Washington, where he had an average of ten letters to read and answer for each working day of the year overcame both the reluctance to write and the difficulty in reading. Added to this was the fact that his increasing years and experience had led him, as it does other men, to rely more on the truth presented than on the semi-mesmeric influence of extempore speaking. He accordingly began to write his sermons, and this became after awhile his habit. But up to that time he had never had a scrap of paper with him in the pulpit. His association with educated men at Washington, and his occasional opportunity to hear a cultured ministry had the effect of making him

more careful and systematic in his work. He became a more critical judge of his own efforts.

1860-1869.

After the return from Washington in 1857, his political life was about ended. With the exception of '61 and '62 as senator from his county, his time was given to his pastoral work. But he was getting to be an old man. He was 67 years old at the beginning of the decade, and therefore 77 at its close.

During this period his mind was most earnestly enlisted in the country's welfare. When he left Congress in '57 he was convinced that war must come, and when it had come, he preached and prayed as he had done all his life for freedom and the Union.

But the best of his work was comforting the families of those who mourned the absence and too often the death of father or husband or friend on the field of battle. But while this was true, he was carefully instructing his church.

He had taken up the habit of preaching series of sermons on connected themes. One long series of this time reached from January until May, having the usual two sermons each Sunday,—one at half past ten A. M., and the other at one P. M.

This series was upon different texts in the Sermon on the Mount. Following this was another on the texts in the 7th of Luke, lasting several months.

A study of these sermons, which have been kept, is a feast of exposition. If the quality of the evangelist had fallen into the background, that of the practical expositor had come in its place.

But the years were telling. His children had all moved to the Far West. The warnings of nature and the ties of family united to impress upon him the duty of giving up the pastorate. It was a great sorrow to him, but it seemed a necessity. In 1867 the arrangement was completed, and August 13th the last trunk was loaded in, and he and his wife took their seats in the carriage.

The flood of memory came rolling in and broke the barriers of his control. He burst out with crying, and could not refrain it. As they were driven swiftly away there came back to the ears of the assembled neighbors the sobs that could not be smothered.

He went to Sycamore, Ill., to live with an only son, Benjamin. There he preached a year as a supply for a feeble Baptist church. But he was homesick and troubled. He was to them nothing but "an old broken down horse," as he used to say. The respect and love that had been shown him in Vermont for fifty years could not be found among strangers. At Georgia they were as anxious to have him return as he was to do so, and after two years and nine months he gladly returned to them, in the month of May, 1870. So when the decade closed he was in the old field of labor.

His wife was, however, in Illinois with the children, and he boarded with his brother-in-law Alban Mears, with whom and his excellent wife he found a most comfortable home and the tenderest care.

1870-1876.

In Georgia he continued to preach as a "stated supply" until October, 1876, when he gave up the work and went to Illinois to finish his life in quiet, though he

visited Vermont several times afterwards. Of these last seven years of his work it is no injustice to him to say that they were not greatly blessed in building up the church. He had never been active in that personal work which leads men to confess their faith. And now in the natural feebleness of his years, he did no pastoral work. It was an act of extreme kindness on the part of the church to permit him to stay as long as he would. The love they had for him made it as much a pleasure for others as for him.

Some of the most touching tokens of public respect were given him by the people of the town, regardless of church or party. And these were kindnesses upon which he dwelt with great satisfaction until the day of his death.

He was well aware of the condition of things; but to leave there was like a child leaving its mother. He loved the very sands of that plain, and the bricks of the meeting-house. One by one he had prayed with mourning friends at the graves in the burying ground, until the whole place seemed hallowed ground. His friends and early associates had been buried there in such numbers that their memories and associations made the quiet "Plain" a crowded city,

> ——More memories than men, more habitants
> Of the thin air than of the solid ground,
> The firmament was quick with life.

To leave there was to lay down a work he loved, and which his mind was yet able to perform, but the body was weak. Added to this was an anxiety for the church. Who would come? Where is the man in this generation who will take the place?

As early as October, 1873, he wrote to a grandson then studying for the ministry as follows:

"I have had it on my mind to write you for a long time, though you have not answered my last letter, in which I made an informal proposition to you to come to Georgia as soon as you get through your studies. * * * I am of the opinion it might be as well for you to begin here as anywhere. You will have a friendly congregation, and one that will wish you well, and rejoice at your prosperity. You can form a character here as well as anywhere, and the people are not desirous of changing ministers often. Elder Mears came here in 1807 and preached until 1826; then I began and have continued until now. If you should come and stay as long as I have, it would go some ways into the next century, and make a ministry of father, son, and grandson* of more than an hundred years. This would be quite an item in church history.

"I know that it is difficult to make any definite engagement so far ahead. Still if your mind seems to lead that way, you could say so to me and there would be nothing irrevocable. But if you have no such leadings say so, and I will say no more about it, as I have no disposition to dictate in this matter.

"This has seemed to me one way in which my long services might terminate with some prospect of the prosperous continuation of the Baptist church in my native town. Give my love to C——, and to the nameless one. I remain,

"Affectionally yours,

"ALVAH SABIN."

*Strictly it would be father, son-in-law, and great-grandson. —[ED.

There were "leadings" in the mind of this grandson toward that place. Indeed, it was his desire. But the Head of the church had other thoughts, so that the way was not yet opened for him to leave the work.

April 6, 1876, he wrote again:

"I received your last letter some time since. It has been of use to me in one respect. It has enabled me to come to one conclusion, namely, that it is my duty to go and live with my children next fall. I have signified my determination to the brethren on several occasions, and have suggested that they should put the parsonage in order, so as to be ready to receive a man whenever there should one be found. They have made a commendable effort and have raised about $1400 for the purpose. * * * Deacon Hale has been up to Derby to see Rev. Mr. Lorimer and wife. He thinks that they may be persuaded to come. If they do, I shall feel that he may stay a good many years, and I shall feel relieved of a great anxiety."

This plan was perfected, and his pastorate ended.

During all this time there was no weakening of his mind, no diminution of his loving interest in men, and the affairs of men. It was a failure of physical strength simply. When he left the work finally he was eighty-three years old. He had been a preacher to that church since 1817, when he began to lead the meetings in the pastor's absence, and expound the word from his study of Scott's Commentaries. This was a period of fifty-nine years.

He was called to be "half-pastor" in 1825, or fifty-one years before; and full pastor in 1827, or forty-nine years. But out of this must be deducted the two

years and nine months when he was absent. The actual time of service as pastor was forty-eight years, in a period of fifty-nine years, during which they were familiar with his voice as their preacher.

These relations ended, but the sweeter ties go on unto eternity.

CHAPTER V.

THE FAREWELL.

The years of an old man in a strange and busy western town are uneventful. It is at best a waiting for the sands of life to run out. Some one has beautifully compared it to Elijah waiting at the brook Cherith, in the famine. Days and weeks go by and the hot sun sucks up the water in hill and valley; the fields are parched; the rills cease their music. Weeks run into months. The brook gets shallower and narrower. The stones put up their heads and seem to ask for rain. Then only the little pools appear, hidden away among the stones. All this time Elijah sits in the shade, daily the ravens bring his food. He knows the shrinking brook will soon fail him, and then how will he quench his thirst? Yet we do not doubt, but Elijah's faith was fully equal to his needs.

So an old man feels his strength wane, sees his hand tremble, grows dull of hearing, finds a mist gathering over the face of all things, and knows that these are signs of the coming end.

Father Sabin, if he ever made the comparison, would not fail to think of the day when Elijah was taken to another place, and became a dependant no longer on brooks and ravens, but on the unfailing cruse of oil.

He waited cheerfully. He was able to read to the last without any difficulty or weariness. To the last he remained among his books. In 1882 he wrote:

"An old man's books are about the only indication to the world of what he has been. They are the centers of associations pleasant to recall."

During these years he wrote many letters to a large circle of correspondents, in which are embodied the memories and reflections of a clear mind, and a heart that had not a trace of acid in its feelings.

He sometimes had visits from ministers of the vicinity, and these he prized very highly. He said he took a new lease of life when he could have a good thorough discussion of some political or theological topic. His faculties and memory of men seemed scarcely to fail. Dates were treacherous, but facts abiding.

His interest in national politics were as intense as if he were a part of them. He attended the Convention in Chicago which nominated Garfield, and went to the city in '84 to attend the Convention, but was not able to get a seat.*

But the strongest must fail as last. In the fall of '84 he was in feeble condition. His once straight and vigorous frame was bowed and trembling. For a long time a catarrhal cough had prevented his lying down to sleep, and the constant half-sitting posture had made his shoulders to fall forward.

December 22, in attempting to pick up something from the floor, he fell and broke the thigh bone just outside the hip joint. The surgeon gave it the most

*The facts in this unpleasant matter have been so misstated that we venture to state them here. One J. Gregory Smith, of St. Albans, was in the delegation from Vermont and to him Mr. Sabin applied through Mr. F. B. Wilkie, of Chicago, for a ticket of admission, but did not succeed in getting one.

careful attention, but nature could not heal it. After five weeks, during which he lay on his back, the summons came and he was free from earth. With the broken leg there was no pain, but the confinement wearied him out.

He settled his estate, giving notes to his heirs, and dividing his books with judgment and clearness among his grandchildren. His mind was then at rest. "Now," said he "I have done what I ought to have done long ago."

One said to him, "I am glad you are prepared for this journey." "Oh," he replied, "It is the least of my thoughts."

Another attempting to comfort him quoted the words of the Savior: "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." "Well," he replied, "It is no matter whether I ever know. It will be right."

We, who stood by him, were for some days troubled at his silence upon the subject of his religious feelings as the day drew nearer. So deep are the mysteries of the other world, and so human is our faith, that we listen to every word from those who go down to death that we may catch some expression from their lips as the doors of eternity open to their eyes. And we watched his lips to hear. But one day he spoke. The message had come. He called us around the bed, and told of his hope. "I go," said he, "very soon. I shall be with my wife and children. It seems hardly possible. I go as a sinner, but I have a good hope in Jesus."

Then folding his hands as if in prayer he said, "Farewell, my friends, farewell!"

After a few words of exhortation he turned to prayer, and plead with God for the family, that they might have an interest in the atoning blood and a good hope in Jesus."

From this time he was unable to talk much, but he often clasped his hands as in prayer, and his lips moved when no sound came. Our prayers that he might be free from pain were most graciously answered from the first. He said, "I feel perfectly well from my throat down." His cough, which for a year had never ceased at night to trouble him, stopped. He said: "I know not what has become of it." And this freedom from pain continued until the last, except occasional cramps from lying in one position. So he slept restfully. When awakened, his mind was clear.

January 28, quietly, peacefully, the strong doors opened and he looked out. A sweet peace stole over his face. Twenty years of age left his features. Then God said: "Come up higher," and our father, pastor, friend was gone—but not forever.

CHAPTER VI.

CHARACTERISTICS.

ALL faces have the same general features, yet no two look alike. Every man has a nose, but not every one has the large, well formed nose of the Cromwellian type. The distinction between faces is founded on the prominence of some part. So in character. There are certain lines of thought and feeling common to all ministers, without which they would be no ministers or at least only deformities, or freaks to be endured and pitied. But that which makes one man worth singling out from the rest; that which makes up the personal equation, is the prominence of certain traits.

Of Alvah Sabin one must say that he was not odd, either in good or bad sense. Mark Twain has written of his own conscience that there seemed to be no particular thing upon which you could put your finger and say: "This is a deformity; yet it was universally a little out of shape." Reversing his very apt expression, we may say that there was no one trait upon which the mind can put its finger and say in this he greatly excelled; yet there was a certain fullness and balance to all which marked him out from other men.

One said at his funeral: "God never chooses a small man to do a great work. He could do more with Alvah Sabin, because he was of good timber. There was left out of his make-up that little meanness which

is in many men. He had no narrow jealousies, he was broad in mind and in sympathies."*

Another in a letter writes: "There was nothing narrow or bigoted about him. He was one of nature's noblemen. He took such broad, sound, practical views of all questions that his opinions and counsel were sought for by all classes."†

"He was a person of generous impulses, ever ready to aid the poor. He possessed a great deal of sympathy for all classes; and was more inclined to praise than find fault with people. He exercised love for all Christians. He mingled in all classes of society. Even in advanced age young people esteemed it a treat to have him at their evening visits. He had good coloquial powers and was fond of anecdote."

"I was not a constant attendant upon his preaching. I never heard him preach during revival. The sermons I heard would feed the flock of God. He wove into his discourse thoughts appropriate to the different conditions of his hearers. When called upon unexpectedly he would follow one train of thought after another and with great vigor. I enjoyed such full as well as his written discourses."‡

"His was a steady, straight forward course. The religion that he preached to-day was good for to-morrow, and the same next day. He always urged men to seriously count the cost. The men who followed his preaching were the most substantial Christians of the town. He had no high pressure ways. I always had confidence in his method of reasoning his hearers into a reform. Were I to advise a preacher, I would say

* Rev. J. H. Woodward.
† Rev. Mr. Chase.
‡ Rev. J. G. Lorimer.

preach sound doctrine and common sense, and risk the result. If any want more 'pressure,' let them get an engine and steam up until they burst, and that will end fictitious religion. He was a sound thinker, and treated his themes in a very lucid, forcible manner, liberal in allowing others to hold their views, as freely as he held his own."*

Another said: "He lived here in Georgia all his life and left not an enemy."†

"His sermons were strong, logical presentations of gospel truth, marked by clear thought rather than wide reading. His style was peculiar. In the commencement of the discourse his thought seemed to move slow, and his introduction was often a little dry; but as he progressed it became more rapid, and he brought the whole strength of his giant mind to the handling of the subject; and went through his discourse in a stately manner, touching every salient point, and presenting it in so new and vigorous a way, that every hearer gave undivided attention. He borrowed imagery from things most familiar, but rarely told a story, or related any incidents from his own history. For strength of mind, and depth of intellect, Alvah Sabin had few equals."‡

"He once preached a series of sermons in a neighborhood where the Universalists had many followers, and at their request. He began with the character of God and spoke of his holiness and justice; his anger at sin; the necessity of a day of judgment; of the character of men; their sinful condition and consequent need of a Savior; God's love; wisdom in the plan of salvation; his com-

* Charles Hobart, in a letter to a young minister.
† Henry Rankin.
‡ Rev. L. A. Dunn, D. D.

passion in Christ Jesus; his broad invitation to the sinners; then followed one on the hardness of heart that marked those who refused so much love and rejected the Savior. At the close of the series he summed up in one discourse the whole matter and portrayed the condition of one who was still unwilling to yield to so good a Savior. As he went on with his clean cut, forceful logic and in the earnestness of his own convictions, one after another of the audience rose up, until they were all standing and leaning forward as if to catch the words of doom that seemed about to fall on those who rejected the Son of Man. The series broke up the sentiment of Universalism in the place, and yet made no enemies. They had been met in a fair and kind spirit, and if not convinced, were silenced."*

From these opinions it will be seen that he impressed men with the honesty of his convictions and the soundness of his conclusions. He was well balanced intellectually, and emotionally. Could we give the testimony of the people of his town concerning the kindness of his heart, we should add to his crown what would most please him.

One of the most prominent things about him was the lack of ambitions in any direction, except to be a good and useful man. He studied to repress faults in his life and character more than to produce excellencies. He believed that the grace of God would produce good fruit if the weeds were kept down so that it had a fair chance. And his work was to keep them down.

He was a good answer to the divine requirement for a minister.

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*Rev. John Kyle.

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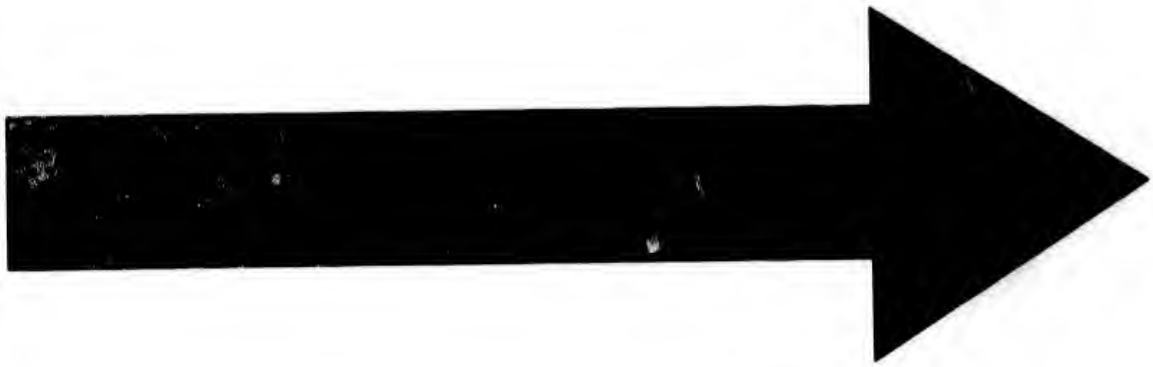

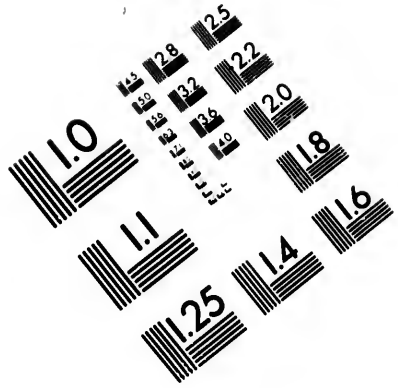

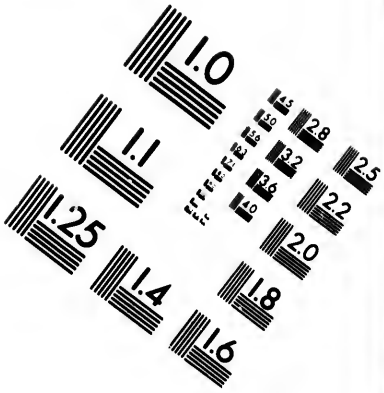

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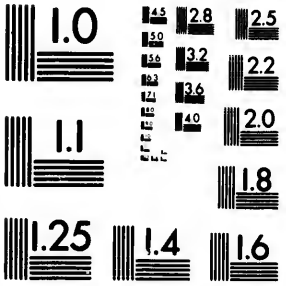

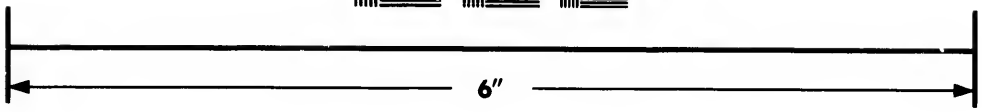

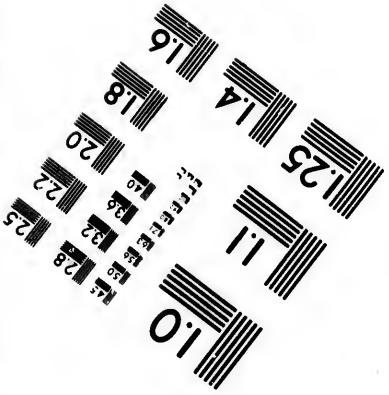

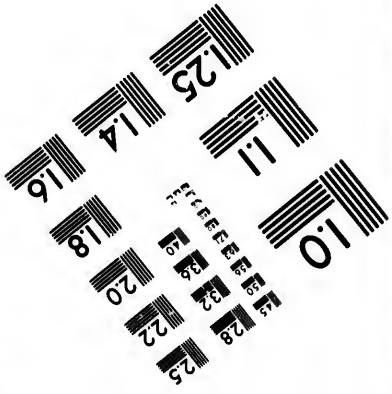

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"*He was blameless as the steward of God.*"

Whether this be applied to his earthly or his spiritual stewardship, it was true. The worldly minded called him generous to a fault. No man ever called on him for assistance who did not get it if he was able to give it. He was always poorly paid by the church, and until he was sixty years old did not know what it was to be free from the embarrassment of poverty. Yet, out of his poverty, he gave with a generous liberality. In the latter part of his life his public services were better paid for, and he was able to do more than formerly. Even then his willingness was greater than his purse. A young man in whom he was interested needed money to help him in school. Mr. Sabin sent him thirty dollars, and said in the letter that he would be glad to do more for him, "but the wishes of friends who are unable to carry them out are worth as much as a painted sun on a garden fence to ripen water-melons." Out of his public services he paid all his former debts, and when his farm was sold he had left a small sum for the easy support of himself and wife during their life, and a little to distribute among his family at death. He never complained at the meagerness of his salary, but used to say that the people of Georgia made up his salary by electing him to the places which did pay.

If we apply the stewardship to the spiritual side of his life it finds an equally good fulfillment. We can find no better statement of his idea of it than words from one of his sermons upon the text: "Give account of your stewardship." "We have remarked that a steward must be true to the interests of his employer. We must be loyal to God; do our duty because God requires it, not solely because the civil law demands it,

or because others do it, or to avoid the speech of people; but because it is right and God requires it. Again we remark that a steward should know what duty is, and the right way of doing it. Some excuse themselves, because they acted according to their knowledge, when the criminality is that they ought to have known better. They should have been teachable, more observing, more reflecting; they should have read more, they should have heeded the counsel of friends and parents, they should have learned wisdom from their own and others experience. We should acquaint ourselves with human nature; we should acquaint ourselves with the particular duties of our business, our trade, our calling, our profession, so that we may do well what is expected of us in our position. A man once said to Billy Gray, a millionaire, 'I knew you when you was nothing but a drummer boy.' Gray replied, 'Did I not drum well?' It is everything to be able to do a laudable act well. Tallyrand speaks of blunders being worse than crimes. Half the world blunder into it, blunder through it, and blunder out of it.

"Every minister is a steward to whom is committed the bread and water of everlasting life. He is to distribute the word aright, and give to to each his portion in due season. He is to show himself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.

"Then the church members have duties in their associated capacity. They are to maintain the public worship of God, the preaching of the word, the singing of the sanctuary, the ordiances of the church, and the discipline of God's house. It requires time, and money, and thought to sustain all these interests; but like all other true and valuable interests, they are worth maintaining."

Thus we see that he had a broad idea of his duty as a steward of God. And this idea was his daily guide. In his political life it was more manifest, because he was more manifestly accountable to some one. He never spent any time in getting himself re-elected. There was not a whisper that he was seeking to enrich himself either honorably or otherwise out of his office. He sought no popularity. But he was a faithful steward and servant of the people who sent him as their representative. He attended to the private claims that had any place in his department; he made the appointments in good faith, and voted with a faithful spirit.

"*He was not self-willed.*"

He was firm in his purposes and opinions, yet in his dealings with others, he did not forget that other men had strong wills as dear to them as his was to him. He always took the ground that a man who had an opinion was in duty bound to hold it until he was convinced that another was better. If he could not be convinced, then he ought not to do more than to submit to a majority. There were times in the half century of his work that a self-willed man would have run against a snag in that church or any other. But he accounted that they had as much interest there as himself, and if he could not make his way appear to be right, it was not a matter of vital importance, and could be yielded without loss of life or happiness.

"*Not given to filthy lucre.*"

It had no temptation for him. Many times in the early part of his life he could have gone to places which would have been more lucrative, but he did not consider them. It was the custom of the times to get a subscription from the members and hand it to him to

collect. The payment was made through the year in such things as were needed for the use of the family. This way, which seems so strange to the younger ministry, was not after all so bad for the times. It was convenient for him and them to have the paper on hand to credit any payments that were made. No subscription of this sort ever went beyond the sum of three hundred dollars until 1869. Yet he said in 1867 that he had never up to that time dunned a man for his subscription. He did not tell all the truth in that statement, or he would have added that some of the subscribers never dunned themselves. After the manner of the place there were "donations" and these were sometimes of great value to him. In the latter half of his life the whole town contributed to them.

It may be said that he ought to have been more careful for the financial interests of his family. His wife was often sorely tried by the scarcity of provisions, and he was mortified by his inability to pay his debts promptly.

Commenting on this feature, he once wrote: "When I look back on my long life, and see how hap-hazard it has been; how many blunders I have made; how little judgment I have shown in the management of my temporal affairs; when I call to mind some of the business enterprises I have been engaged in, in connection with my limited means of prosecuting them to success, it makes me bow my head in shame in my private room. I have all through the meridian of my life supported my family on the verge of poverty, and have given my time and property to those who have scarcely thanked me for it. I have owed debts which I could not pay promptly. These embarrassments have tended to

weaken my independence of judgment, and compelled me to ask favors which humiliated me.

It was not often that he allowed himself to speak thus. His usual feeling was one of gratefulness to the people, and of joy that he had been permitted to do something to help his fellow-men. From all wordly-wise standpoints, this judgment on his disregard for the money side of the pastoral office was a just one. There is no reason why the faithful pastor should be subjected to the embarrassments of debt or poverty, unless the people to whom the ministers are in like circumstances. And, if the poverty is due to a generosity which can not keep what has been paid to him, then a man may justly condemn his own management; and younger men may take warning without going to the other extreme of loving money more than their fellow-men.

"*He was a lover of hospitality.*"

All ministers of New England had the practice of it, but to some it was like the service of the temple to the Jews in the time of Malachi: "Behold what a weariness is it." Not so to him. The day was the brighter if it gave rest and food to some wayfaring man.

He was a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he had been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convince the gainsayers.

In respect to the general idea of the gospel work he wrote: "I have been in doubt whether my views of evangelical doctrine were in harmony with those of my brethren or not. I have years ago written articles for ministerial meetings that led men who were not ac-

quainted with me to say, 'You are opposed to revivals. I say to them, No; but I wish to teach that Christians should have so uniform and unremitting a performance of duty that it will remove the necessity of revivals. I hold that it is the duty of every Christian to so live that he will not decline, and need a revival to bring him to his duty. I believe that one great object of a stated ministry is to instruct men, and persuade them by sound reasoning to stand fast in the faith; to act according to their convictions; to maintain a symmetrical character. I think that this ought to be preached as practical, revival or no revival. I would preach to the unconverted that it is their duty to be Christians, and to do Christian duty as much as if they were professors of religion. The fact that they are unwilling to do duty does not excuse them from doing it. The duty is imposed because it is right, and necessary. Any aversion to it shows a dislike to what is right.

"I hear from many preachers the declaration made to the unconverted: 'You are totally helpless. You can do nothing that will be acceptable to God. You can never be a Christian till the Holy Spirit converts you.' These declarations, unexplained, may be construed into a reasonable excuse for the omission of duty. It seems to be implied that until God has done his part, the sinner can not do his. But the sinner can not throw his responsibility upon God, and plead his inability to do what is right and proper. The Edwards definition of free will is the right one. What we have not the physical ability to do, we are excused from doing; but moral inability is the want of disposition to do what is right and that constitutes our criminality.

"Now that there have been revivals is not to be doubted. That they have done much good is not to be doubted. That a percentage of them has proved to be spurious is not to be doubted. An evangelist may be a good and instructive preacher who will bring the people together. He may concentrate his discourses upon themes that will bestir the minds of his hearers to see their situation as one of neglect of duty and rejection of Jesus, and of doing despite to the monitions of conscience and the Holy Spirit. He may impress the necessity of coming to a decision at this time; and point out the hazard of delaying it until the hereafter. Then, as we are all sympathetic beings, our minds are moved as the minds of others are moved. Stupor and inattention are awakened by the interest of those around us. Then the reanimation of those who have been sustaining the cause for years, expressing their joys, confessing their faults, exhorting the awakened, and assuring them that their strength shall be equal to their day—a combination of all these influences may arouse the dormant minds of hundreds in a community in a short time. But this work is greatly advanced by the sound, steady, uniform preaching that precedes it. Ignorant persons may be moved, but their faith will be imbecile. Those who are weak in the faith are to be received, but they are to be taught the way of the Lord more perfectly. A disciple is a learner; the church is a school; the minister is, under Jesus, the teacher."

"*Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus.*"

This was one of the positive rules under which he placed himself. No other would have held him so long without the attempt at least to change the ills he had,

and fly to others he knew not of. When he was sad and discouraged, he consoled himself with the thought that the Lord reigns over his church, and will not suffer it to be permanently confounded. When men were slow to move as he thought they ought to, he remembered how slow he had been to move to his duty. He said: "The minister has his dark hours, and doubts as to his fitness for the work. When the minds of Christians are in a low state, he feels that if he were what he ought to be it would not be so. But these feelings are common to all preachers at certain times. If the churches call us to preach for them, and the people are edified by our preaching, we may come to the conclusion that we are in our place. If all who are at times discouraged should quit preaching, there would soon be no preachers. 'Be not weary in well doing for in due time ye shall reap if ye faint not.'"

In a letter to a young minister who was just ordained, he wrote:

GEORGIA PLAIN, July 13, 1875.

DEAR ———:—I received your last with satisfaction. Your brief articles of belief I think were well expressed. They covered the whole ground; they brought out the proper heads, and expressed them in language free from cant phrases and technical objections. It was a short way of getting over what is sometimes a tedious process, and saves an hundred questions. The paper itself is worth preserving. It might be a good code of articles of faith to be adopted at the organization of a church.

I expected you would come off respectably at your examination. But now will come the rubber, to preach, preach, preach, week after week and month after month,—and sustain the congregation. You will have your patience tried with the freaks and notions of the

old and young; but you know that this is to be borne, be you where you may. But never show temper to any one; never make tart replies to any one; treat every one's opinion with respect; and know that the opinion of some plain man, the suggestions of some motherly matron, may be the safest counsel to follow. Do not make up your mind to remove because of some difficulties, for they are found everywhere. The most that we can expect is to swap troubles—and we may find the boot on the wrong leg.

In order to gain an established reputation, we must be able to sustain ourselves for some time in one place. A continued ministry among one people tends to enlarge one's mind, and to turn the wheel out of the rut into which itinerant preachers are so apt to fall. Very much depends on the cultivation of our preaching talent. but we must also cultivate the pastoral gift. A minister should be a ready man on every subject that is discussed by the public mind. The Society should have the right to feel that their minister is every whit a whole man, and one they have no occasion to be ashamed of anywhere. He should have no spots nor wrinkles, nor any such thing in his character. His house, his carriage, his dress should show that he is a man of good taste. "Trifles make perfection, but perfection is no trifle."

You have my most sincere and earnest and honest prayer that you may succeed. And I have a good degree of confidence that you will. A. SABIN.

At another time he wrote: "A minister, by remaining in one place, acquires an influence as a citizen and is esteemed as such. * * He should so hold himself that he may have the confidence of both sides in any controversy which may arise in church or society. Still all questions must be decided justly. But with all the wisdom and discretion we can use, we shall find those who can not be prevailed upon to submit to the best

common sense rules that can be devised. This we must endure."

These show that he knew the duties of a soldier, and did not flinch from them because they were sometimes irksome.

If there was any place where he was markedly deficent, it was on the pastoral side. It is not likely that he ever visited his church systematically. He never obtained the appointment of a commitee to do any church work, or had any of the modern inventions for looking after strangers. But this is due to something else than dislike or neglect of the work.

The church was small, probably never more than 200 members. The meeting house was in a country place, only from three to five houses near it, and these farm-houses. The post-office was obtained by his influence in congress in 1853 or '4 and that is now in one of the family dwellings, the "store" having ceased to be in operation.

The pews were never rented, but free to all comers. If a stranger should come, every one would know him to be a stranger, and the hospitable ways of the Green Mountain State do not wait to hear how much bank stock a man owns, nor what sort of a house his father lives in, before giving him a hand and saying: "I don't remember your name? Be you living down by the sawmill? Working for anybody down there? Going to stay? Well, that's good. Now we have lots of room. Just make yourself at home."

There is no need of a committee on strangers there. Such a committee would be the most strange thing that comes into church. It is the habit of the place to be civil to everybody. If any one doubts it, let him

ride from Burlington to St. Alban's Bay along the lake road. Every man he meets will salute him—unless it should be another city fellow out on the same errand.

Had he been in a church where it was needed, he would have adapted himself to the field doubtless; as it was, every one in the town knew him, and knew that he was glad to see them.

Yet there was a deficiency in the matter of personal conversation with the members of his congregation, and in urging them to public profession of their faith. The town has scores of families who have been brought up under his preaching, and have a hope in the Savior, but have never made any further profession of it than their love for Alvah Sabin, and their attendance at church.

They are honorable, kind, respectful to the word of God, keepers of the Sabbath, and doubtless maintain secret prayer; but they never frankly avow their faith in Jesus. As a result, they are not as influential as they might be, and their hope is not as certain as it might be. In private conversation they confess their hope; but, never having by public confession united with Christ's people, they are not so positive in their own minds as they would be if they fulfilled the command to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Had he by private conversation pressed home this duty as he could, it would have added to the strength of the church and the joyfulness of those who were thus led to fuller duty.

We should shrink from writing this censure on him, did we not know that he was in some measure conscious of it. In the spring of 1876 he wrote:

"You allude to one fact in my ministry which I have been conscious of many years; that of not visiting the

families of the church and congregation. In the first place I never had much talent that way. I always dreaded it. Then I never believed in its utility as much as some do. The way the time is generally spent is a mere waste time, and if one were to spend half his time in this way, it would not satisfy one-half the people.

"Then there has been one-third of the time that I have had no promise from any one that they would pay me a dollar. I have had a great family to support and had to look after the cultivation of a farm to supply my yearly wants. While schooling my children, I had to hire money at high rates and sometimes was in great straits and did not know which way to turn.

"Then some of the time I have been in public business and that has occupied my time. Since I came back in 1869 I have been as free from care as I could ask to be; but I have had no horse, and the neighbor who has one has use for it, and I had as lief be whipped as to ask for one when he wants it.

"And now I am so infirm I can not walk more than a mile or so. This is my apology for my neglect, yet it is by no means satisfactory. I look back on my long ministry with much mortification, and I often with tears confess to God my short-comings in duty, and pray that I may share the grace that is bestowed on the chief of sinners. I hope that you may be able to devote yourself with a more single eye to your ministry than I have ever been able to, and if possible keep yourself free from debt. We had better be parsimonious than to be in debt, and we had better be sharp and exacting with our brethren than to owe bills we can not pay. A preacher who can not pay his debts will always be called dishonest by his creditors."

Such is his own lament. It can not be made to speak plainer by any additional words. To those that knew him well even this blemish was like a spot on the sun. So much real tenderness and friendship for all the towns-people needed not a formal expression. It is the critical eye alone that sees our faults. Let only those who have the excellencies that hide the deficiency venture to do without the pastoral element.

CHAPTER VII.

POLITICAL RECORD.

In early life he was interested in the affairs of the state and the Nation. This led him to volunteer in the war of 1812-14. He had also a natural liking for the forum. The place of debate was a place of delight. But his first election to any office was in the year 1826. At this time there was not any special principle in issue. After the war of 1812 there came over the whole country a great calm. The administration of President Monroe was without incident. Elections were made on grounds of personal preference among candidates. The term of Hon. Horatio Seymour, senator from Vt. expired in 1826 and Ex-governor Van Ness was a candidate against him in re-election. There was to be a close ballot, and the friends of Van Ness in Georgia, knowing the personal friendship of Mr. Sabin for him, took the liberty of nominating and electing the latter to the legislature without any consultation, or even knowledge on his part of their intentions. But his political bias was with Mr. Seymour, and when the election came he voted for him, much to the disgust of the men who had elected him. The next year he was left out. But that year was the beginning of a new movement which lasted several years and gave scope to his mind and heart. The murder of William Morgan by a small band of Masons for his attempt to divulge the secrets of the Order was a thing in itself not likely to make any wide spread agitation, if the murderers were found and

punished. But, as the investigation went on, it was believed that almost the whole body of Masons was determined to prevent the arrest and punishment of the parties. In the state of New York, where the murder was committed, many arrests were made of those who were concerned in the crime. But it was found that courts and juries were almost powerless to do any thing like justice. So great was the indifference to the law of the land that a special Committee of which Mr. Thurlow Weed was the chairman was appointed to inquire into the matter and also to prosecute the cases. There were eight persons convicted of being helpers in the abduction, and these were sentenced to short terms in the penitentiary. The report of the committee contained these words: "There seems to have been a determination on the part of the fraternity not only to suppress all information in regard to the outrages but to repress all inquiries with regard to it. Individuals who ventured to make remarks which such an infraction of the law was calculated to elicit were made the subjects of unreasonable abuse and vindictive hostility by the lodge-going members of the fraternity.

"The public press, which has in almost every other instance of great crimes been made the means of investigation, or at least of making public the details of crime, was in this instance (with a single exception at first) awed into the most slavish silence by the influence of Free-Masonry. Public officers who acknowledged the value of the masonic obligation have been found wanting in their duty as officers in relation to prosecutions connected with this outrage. With one exception no assistance has been given during the whole course of the investigation by any adhering member of the Ma-

sonic fraternity. On the contrary, individual Masons not directly implicated in the crime have interposed every obstacle in their power to prevent the discovery of the truth. Purses have been liberally opened, exertions have been freely given, to prevent convictions, to enable offenders to elude justice, and to aid in the removal and concealment of important witnesses. Though several persons have been convicted by juries, and some of them have even confessed their guilt, yet not a single one of them has been subjected to a masonic censure. On the contrary most of them have had the countenance and support of the Order, and have received its sympathy and patronage."

It is not the purpose of the writer to either condemn or excuse the masonic fraternity, nor to say how much of this report was the truth. It is given to show what was the feeling of the time, and to account for the earnestness with which Christian people opposed the Order. When it was taken into the political arena the battle became still more bitter. While it was a matter of private discussion, or even church discipline, its methods were at least honorable; but when it took upon its-self the task of controlling the elections, it was like the employment of the Indians by the English in the war of the Revolution; they were easily set to fighting, but they could not be called away until the fierceness of the Indian had been satisfied by the scalps of the whites. In this case the political papers were the Indians. With the zeal of the Indian they swung the war club of calumny, and of bitter personal attack.

The men who were sincerely disposed to find out the murderers, for the sake of justice only, were accused of digging up bodies and calling them Morgans just for

the sake of political effect. And on the other hand the whole Masonic fraternity was branded as a body of murderers, or a band of conspirators against the law of the land. But then as now the voice of the political paper was no more the voice of the sober minded people, than the theological discussions of a country tavern represent the teachings of the churches.

Yet, making all allowance for this exaggeration and unjust imputation, there was good cause for the public to turn attention to the matter. William Morgan was kidnapped, and was not found alive. His body was afterwards thrown up by the waters and identified by by his wife. While no one at this day thinks that the Masonic fraternity as a whole or in any large part were the murderers, yet it is evident that there was needed, for the welfare of the fraternity itself, a check upon those members who had the disposition to carry the authority of a secret organization so far as to prevent the fullest liberty of speech to its members, without danger to life or liberty.

Unless there should be found some morally criminal conspiracy, a healthy public sentiment will always despise the man who reveals the secrets of an organization into which he has voluntarily entered. He is at liberty to oppose and condemn the society if he thinks best, and more than that he cannot do without losing the respect of good men. Yet if he does more, no set of men have right to lay violent hands on him.

And when we see how the committees of investigation reported that the officers of justice were so often members of the Order, it is not to be wondered at that the movement took a political direction. And we do not find any reason for censuring a minister of the gos-

pel who threw his strength into the cause. In the state of New York committees from the legislature investigated the matter and reported several times. In Vermont the Anti-masonic party was formed in 1829 and for several years maintained the conflict. In October, 1838, when the legislature came together it was found that there had been no selection for governor. The Masonic candidate, S. C. Crafts, had received 13,486 votes; W. A. Palmer, the Anti-masonic candidate had 10,925 votes; while the Administration candidate had 6,285.

This state of things threw the selection of Governor into the Assembly, where after 32 ballots the Masonic candidate was chosen by a small majority. In 1831 there was no choice by the vote of the people, but the Anti-masonic candidate, W. A. Palmer, was chosen in the legislature by a majority of one. In 1832 there was again no choice by the people and after 43 ballots the Anti-masons were able to choose the Governor. In 1833, the Anti masons elected their candidate by a majority of 3,117. In 1834, Mr. Seymour, a third candidate of those who were tired of the masonic war had upwards of 10,000 votes which threw the election into the assembly and the Anti-masons were successful. In 1835 there was again no election and in the assembly no choice could be made, and the Lieutenant governor Mr. Jenison acted as governor. But he with the Treasurer were both Anti-masonic candidates, and were elected by large majorities. He was in the following year chosen governor and was re-elected yearly until and including 1840. Mr. Sabin was an active though a fair and honorable participant in this struggle. It was a question which entered into the national parties, and

his attention was turned to the larger fields of political activity. In 1832 William Wirt was a presidential candidate, and Vermont alone gave him a majority. In that year Mr. Sabin received 36 votes for member of congress.

In '35, '38 and '40 he was the representive of his town in the Assembly chosen on the Anti-mason's ticket. He was called upon to lecture on the subject in different places, and did so with convincing power. He was chosen as delegate from Vermont to the American Anti-masonic Convention at Philadelphia in 1828, and helped to frame the address which that body published to the country.

Toward the close of this decade the Masonic question waned in its prominence. But there was the little cloud in the west which was destined to deluge the land, not with the refreshing showers that gladdened the land of Palestine at the prayer of Elijah, but with a deluge of blood that should flow for the liberty of the slaves. We are all familiar with the general movement of the slave question. It was in the country when the Constitution was adopted. There were then many who wished to get rid of the system, but the confederation was not received with as much euthusiasm at first as it was defended afterwards. Probably if there had been an attempt to do anything at that time toward a constitutional interference with slavery, it would have prevented the Federal Union entirely. Furthermore there was good reason to think that the evil would cure itself, if left in peace. As a matter of fact slave labor was never in a broad sense profitable to the community which had it. It was observed by those of that day that the communities of New England prospered, and

grew in intelligence more than those of the South. There were many of the slave holders who looked for gradual emancipation through the unprofitableness of the whole system. But the purchase of the territory of Louisiana and its admission in 1812 opened to the people of the states a great and rich country into which the slaves could be taken for the raising of cotton. Just before this also the perfection of the cotton gin had made the raising of cotton more profitable than it had formerly been. Thousands were moving to the new territory and taking up large tracts of land and embarking in the cultivation of this staple. In 1808 the importation of slaves had been imperatively forbidden. As a result the price of slaves to take into the new regions was greatly increased. Men who had been considered slave-poor found themselves in possession of great wealth in human property. They naturally became intensely hostile to any movement likely to disturb unfavorably the value of their living estates. The Southern members in Congress watched every opportunity to guard and strengthen the slave power. As new states were formed from the Western territories it was a part of the policy to have them admitted as slave states. The North was opposed to this, and, though in the minority, constantly watched the opportunity to head off the advance of the evil. In 1820 the state of Missouri came into the Union after a long and troublous effort lasting for two years. The Restrictionists sought to demand an anti-slave clause in the Constitution of the state, but the Southern members objected that this was an infringement on the rights of the state. They insisted that the state alone could determine it. This was the early Shiboleth of the slave

party. "*Leave it to the states, do not interfere with the states!*" Finally a compromise was made in the case of Missouri which it was hoped by some would settle the matter. It was agreed to admit the state as a slave state with the provision that all the territory north of 36 degrees and 30 minutes should henceforth be free territory except so much as was contained in the new state of Missouri. The slave power, would it was thought, be able to control all south of that line.

But no compromise with evil ever cures it. That line of Mason and Dixon as it was called made two nations of that which was called one nation. All important legislation must be determined with reference to this question of slavery. The purposes of the two parts became so different that the legislation for the welfare of one was detrimental to the other. The purpose of the North was to train all the inhabitants to intelligent and happy self support. To earn one's living was the honorable thing to do. Even the children of the wealthy in Vermont thought it was a sign of weakness not to earn their way in the world. Hence the feeling was strong that we ought to encourage manufacturing of all goods needed for home consumption. This would furnish honorable and diversified employment for sons and daughters near home; and save to our own citizens the profit on the manufacture, instead of sending all but the cost of the raw material to some foreign country. It was held that even if we paid a larger margin to the home manufacturer than was paid to the foreign trade yet, inasmuch as it was in a certain sense in the family, it was to be encouraged.

But the whole tendency of the Southern system was toward making honest labor dishonorable. They pro-

posed to live by the work of others. They were to be a privileged class. To get what they wanted as cheap as they could was the natural purpose of their minds. The encouragement of manufacturing was to them nothing desirable, if it was for the time at least to increase the cost of some goods. With this radical difference of purpose came a distinct difference of wish in regard of the tariff. The manufacturing states desired a tariff which would keep out foreign goods and thus create a market for those made by our own people. The cotton growing states desired no tariff for they could get foreign goods at a little smaller price.

The Protectionists however prevailed in Congress, and in the year 1828 a high protective tariff was ordered. This was but another opportunity for the South to insist on the protection of the rights of the states. It was claimed that the Congress of the United States had no right to say whether a state should buy its goods in one market or another. And no right was granted to impose a tax on them when there were bought. The question was argued with a great earnestness because it was really the question of slavery that was in defence. If the principle of State Rights was established in this matter it would be an authoritative precedent in other matters.

In connection with this principle was the famous speech of Daniel Webster against Mr. Hayne, of South Carolina. Mr. Hayne took the ground that whenever Congress passed a law which in the judgment of any state was not in accord with the Constitution, such state was justified in refusing to obey it. In the case under consideration South Carolina thought that the law of the tariff was not constitutional, and hence that

state was not bound to obey it. This idea was carried out in 1832 by an attempt to resist the collection of duties on imported goods in that state. But General Jackson was President then, not James Buchanan, the traitor.

Mr. Webster argued that the Constitution declares that laws passed by Congress in accord with the Constitution are the supreme laws of the land, and that no one state has the power to decide that a law is not in accord with the Constitution.

A majority of the states must agree as to that and must express their views through their representatives in Congress.

In all the decade this question was gaining prominence. With the tariff and slavery questions, both of which were vital to the prosperity of the country, under discussion the whole nation was awake politically.

In 1837 came the great panic. This was attributed to the bad government of the party in power, and caused such a stir that the administration was changed by a mighty effort.

To an observant mind the one real question of that time was: How shall we get rid of slavery? The North was not content to stop its extention; it must be banished from the land. In regard to the methods there was a great divergence of views. Some said, "Let Congress abolish." Others said, "Congress has no right to do so." Others said, "Take away the restrictions and let it stand on its merits and it will die of itself." Societies were formed in the states to promote a sentiment against it, but there was no political organization in Vermont to combat it until 1841. The

feeling was however very bitter. The South had sent some requests, almost amounting to demands on the Northern states, to pass laws which should prevent agitation of the question. They supposed that it was an easy thing to gag the free people of Massachusetts and New York. These were referred to a committee. The opponents of slavery sought and obtained a hearing, and the feeling was very soon developed that the Northern states could manage their own affairs without the help of any slave-supported Southern aristocrat. But the men who attempted to speak in public were subject to abuse and mobs. In the South there was one sure remedy for all disturbances: "Dupont's best powder and cold steel." No Northern man was safe there, unless he disgraced his native state by professing slavery principles.

If slavery was itself a bad and expensive thing, this may even now be looked upon with some allowance, and they who were born in the midst of it may be excused for not despising it. But the disregard of human life which marked the pro-slavery party North and South has no excuse; and is the convincing testimony that slave holding hardens men's hearts, blunts their sense of right, and their regard for the rights of others.

Any one who is at all familiar with the character which belongs to the descendants of the Green Mountain Boys knows that this question stirred the people of Vermont to the depths with anger. A minister who did not take an interest in it and make that interest known would have lost his influence. Mr. Sabin needed no such spur to his interest. From a boy he had been a hater of slavery. As a man he was an anti-slavery man under all circumstances. But he was

never identified with the Abolition party. He always spoke and voted anti-slavery when that question was involved, and they who elected him to any office knew he would do so. He often spoke on the question in his own town and in other places. In 1833 he was engaged by the American Anti-Slavery Society to lecture in northern Vermont. Before beginning the work he went with many others to a meeting at Philadelphia, where he met Wm. Lloyd Garrison, Arthur and Lewis Tappan, Dr. Beeman and many other prominent workers in the cause of freedom. In the following winter he spoke on the subject in nearly every town in the counties of Franklin, Lamoille, Chittenden and Grand Isle. His known anti-slavery sentiments thus gave him a great influence in the Whig party of which he was an adherent. There were some who were not satisfied to have him there, and who insisted that he pulled down with one hand what he built up with the other. But he never regretted his course. He was not a radical. He was a prudent man who could not only see both sides and all the contingencies of a question but he deemed it a duty to do so and to act in the light of them. And he believed in controlling as far as possible when he could not have things all his own way.

The slave power was not only a strong one but a thoroughly united one. It needed every man of the North to hold it in check; and any weakening of the numbers was sure to increase the power of the South. He said, "It is better to keep with the party that is nearest right, and make the best anti-slavery platform that is practicable. This will tend to convert the indifferent ones and to swell the ranks of the Abolitionists."

Whatever this principle may do in some cases, in the Whig party in Vermont it was the means of good. There were many anti-slavery men in it, and their votes were sufficient to keep the party platforms in sympathy with the Abolition movement. Mr. Sabin when he was in the state legislature was invariably made chairman of the committee on resolutions concerning slavery, and these resolutions are strong enough to satisfy the most zealous Abolitionists.

In 1836 while other places throughout the country were mobing the friends of freedom, Vermont was not free from the shame. A meeting was broken up in Montpelier, but the next day Mr. Sabin introduced a resolution recommending the legislature to pass some act making it a misdemeanor to disturb an assembly of orderly people, whatever the subject of their discussion might be. And in support of the resolution he made an earnest speech for the right of free discussion. This was the first act of the Vermont legislature and his was the first speech before that body on the subject.

From that time the battle drew on. It was getting more and more evident that the South would not be satisfied to stay as they were; nor the North any better pleased to let them remain so. There was an irrepressible conflict coming. In what way it would be brought on no one knew; but the merest tyro in history could see that two so different interests as slavery and freedom could not exist in the same government.

In Alton, Illinois, there was a brutal attack on an earnest godly man, Rev. Owen Lovejoy, and he was finally murdered for pleading with his Christian friends to give up slavery. The cruelty of that town was such in the whole proceeding as to make that town a

foul blot on the state. Yet this was only one of the numberless and nameless crimes that were committed against men for expressing hostility to what was the condensation and crystalization of all crimes.

Finally the sentiment was so strong that petitions began to be sent in great numbers to Congress to do something in mitigation of the evil. But the sensitive spirit of the Southern aristocrats could not endure such reminders of their guilt. A petition on the subject, like the ghost of Banquo to Macbeth, stirred the memory of a crime for which there was a coming judgment. Congress passed resolutions not to notice any petitions of this sort. But at the next session they would be sent in, and a new act of treachery was needed to quiet them for the year. Finally, through the bravery of John Q. Adams who for seven full hours stood upon the floor of Congress, amid storms of abuse claiming his right to the floor, and to read the petition of his constituency, the dull sense of the South began to awake to the fact that some thing was to be done, and slavery was at last abolished in the District of Columbia.

Stormy times followed for many years, until a mightier than man laid His hand onthe question and it was settled forever. But during all the struggle until 1857 Mr. Sabin was an active participant in behalf of freedom. In 1840 he was in the Assembly; in '41, '43, '44, '45, in the Senate from Franklin Co.; again in the Assembly in '47, '48, '49, '61, '62. In 1841 he was made Secretary of state. The following is the account he gave of this:

"Chauncey L. Knapp had been Secretary for several years before, and did the work of office well. He was put out because he was an adherent of the third or anti-

slavery party, and I was put in because I was anti slavery but not one of the third party. The Whigs knew that I could carry more of the votes of the third party than any one whom they could select. They knew that there was but a shade of difference between the views of Mr. Knapp and myself. It was all planned unbeknown to me, and Mr. Knapp was the first one to inform me that I was to run against him. I most sincerely declined the nomination. One of the duties of the office was to read the reports of the county conventions in the joint sessions of the legislature. These were written in the blindest manner, and I was not at all ready in reading the writing of others. And when I found that I was elected in spite of my remonstrance, I was in exquisite pain day and night, for I had reason to fear that I should appear ridiculous. I avoided exposure by requesting the Secretary of the Senate, who was always present to read for me. This he did for two or three meetings; and then I appointed Mr. Knapp as my assistant and after that he did the work and took the salary as if he were the Secretary, and I had no trouble about it. The Whigs who elected me never found any fault with this. As I had declined the position at two meetings, I think they knew I was not solicitious for it, and perhaps they expected me to do some thing of the sort."

It has already been noticed that he received 36 votes for Congress one year in the Anti-masonic convention. This was not of much value, yet it was a straw to indicate the possibilities of the future. About 1848 he received 18 votes in the convention, from Franklin Co. for Congressman. This fairly brought his name to notice. In 1850 the state lost one Congressman, and

this made a new districting necessary. The Whigs so divided it that two districts would surely have Whig majorities. The northern district was left doubtful. At a convention in Johnson, in 1852, he was nominated for Congress. He entered the canvass heartily. There was little hope of success for the Democrats but the third party were to be overcome. There was no choice by the people. A new election was called. Under the law of the state a plurality vote elects in a second election, and by such vote he was successful.

He went to Congress in March, 1853. The Democrats had a majority in both houses and Franklin Pierce was not the man to veto anything they did for the advancement of slavery, or the protection of its interests. But the reaction of wickedness was beginning to be felt. All law and all right had been made subservient to the one great wrong, slavery. But as Mr. Greely so forcefully said, "They who do wrong not only sin but blunder." So the blunder of their course was appearing.

In the "Compromise" of 1850, in which Mr. Webster turned traitor to his own life record, the principle was conceded that fugitive slaves must be returned. Laws to that effect were passed, and the whole North became a field for slave hunting. Nothing could have been better planned to give the Northern people a just idea of what slavery was than this. To hear of slavery is one thing, and to see a fellow being chased like a dog, shot at like a robber, then hand-cuffed and taken back to life long bondage worse than deaths quite another thing. The pro-slavery men at the North became ashamed of themselves and thousands deserted their party and became at least neutrals in the contest. Many joined the anti-slavery party.

Mr. Sabin was in Congress at this time when the fear of defeat on one side and the growing confidence on the other made the contest most bitter.

He was tried beyond measure, in his effort to keep a Christian spirit toward men. He had a hatred of the southern aims so burned into him that he never overcame it. He saw the wounded, bleeding Sumner carried out, and the indignation burned until he could scarcely contain himself. When he heard of Brooks' death he said, "I am perfectly reconciled to his death."

Of his own work there he said, "it was humble; but I was at my post. I paid attention to all that was presented for the consideration of the House. The votes I cast I still think were for the good of the country. I was glad to get away, it had been a constant wrangle night and day."

After returning he was Senator from his county two terms.

The interest in such affairs was fresh until the last. We can not better close this chapter than with a letter of his written in 1881 to a grandson who was disposed to be a "Liberal" though brought up on the unadulterated milk of the New York *Tribune:*

The Democrats who are really the South, have endeavored to gain the confidence of the entire country. But they are so sore under their defeat that they have done what they could to retrieve their fortunes and to regain their former prestige which was annihilated by the war. This election confirms the act of reconstruction. It confirms the constitutional amendments. It shows where the strength of the government lies, it shows to Europe that we are a nation and not a confederation of

states, and that the government is dearer to the hearts of the people than all other blessings combined.

The Republicans may congratulate themselves and the country that the party went through the ordeal of the Chicago Convention and came out as unscathed as it did. The several candidates stand as high in the party and in the country as they did before the Convention and their harmony in support of the common cause has not been interrupted and all are in harmony with the President-elect. The political, financial and business affairs of the country were never more promising than at this time. The country is not only satisfied, but highly gratified with the man they have elected. They are proud of his talent, his morals, his discreetness, his affability, his statesmanship.

Now as to the political state of our country. The Democrats of the South claim the right to manage their own election of President, Vice-President and members of Congress and Senators as they please; and that Congress has no right, by its Marshals or Inspectors to supervise these elections at all. Now if the South conducted these elections according to law and justice there would be no occasion for Inspectors or Supervisors. An honest man has a right to go where he pleases, and the law is to protecthim. But suppose there are half a dozen indictments against him for arson, thefts and rape, and he claims the protection of the law, what does the court say to him. The protection of the honest man implies the apprehension and punishment of the dishonest. To treat them both alike is to neutralize all laws and all protection.

The North is just as much interested in the elections of the South as to United States officers as they are in the elections of the North, and the South is as much

interested in the elections of the North as in the South. They are one government organized under the one constitution, and acting under one law, and voting for the same officers, who are chosen to preside over the entire Union. One state can not supervise the polling places of another state, but the House of Representatives in Congress is the judge of the election of its own members. And so is the Senate. They have the power to send for persons and papers to prove or disprove the facts in any disputed case. Congress is the court of last appeal. Then in adopting the three last amendments of the Constitution, there is a special provision that Congress shall have power to pass acts, to carry out these provivisions. It was with reference to this amended clause, that Congress passed the act making it the duty of the Marshals and their deputies to attend the polling precincts in certain cases and to supervise so for as the election of United States officers are concerned, the elections. And it was with a view to prevent these Marshals from doing these duties that the Democrats in Congress saddled the appropriation bill with the provision that caused Hayes veto and caused the extra session. These Marshals were bound by the law as much as the judges appointed by the state authorities, and there is no complaint that these Marshals ever decided any case wrongly or against law. But the State Rights men claim that they have the sole right to decide their questions, although their decisions may determine who shall be President of the United States, as might be the case in a very close and equal division among the great political parties.

The admission of the rebel states back into Union was a legislative act the most difficult to be performed.

Instead of prosecution and condemnation, confiscation, and executions, the Rebels were pardoned by thousands and even their civil disabilities removed and they were made eligible to seats in Congress. The Vice President of the Confederacy comes back to his old seat in Congress and 40 Rebel Brigadiers step into vote measures to pay the debt of the government; they fought four years to destroy, and to decide on the claims of the sick and wounded Union soldiers for pensions, and to decide on claims for damage done to citizens in the Southern states under the claim that they were Union men. While they had occasion to be thankful to their stars for the magnanimity of Congress they subdued, mortified, the object of the rebellion lost, having their war debt repudiated, and they themselves bankrupt, they were in no state of mind to discharge the duties of members of Congress impartially. They have as much reason to be thankful for the pardon of their crimes against the government as the Blacks had for Emancipation.

Instead of accepting the situation and coming back to sustain the new state of things they labour to thwart every government measure.

The war was waged to confirm slavery in the Union. They appealed to arms for the decision. And by arms it was decided. They were bound by every principle of honor to abide by the decision and all that came in to Congress solemnly promised to do so. The Blacks had no agency in bringing about the war. But the government called them into the field to fight the battles of the country with the implied promise that they should have freedom and the same civil rights as other Union soldiers. The Blacks understood the objects of

the war and they were all Union men and fought bravely. Now the government is bound to protect them as if they were white men. To leave them in the hand of "Ku-Klux," "White Leagues," "Regulators," and lawless bands to be striped, their houses burned, their wives ravished, their children thrown in the street and themselves hung to the limbs of the trees, like sheep-thief dogs, all this in time of peace, years after the close of the war and they, the Blacks, free men and nominally under the protection of law, is high-handed treachery; yet the murderers run at large and their crimes are commended as acts of patriotism by a majority of the white citizens, and also by many Democrats in the northern states. And after killing more than three thousand men, and utterly annihilating the civil rights of four million of people, they still adhere to their hellish policy. And say, Leave the blacks in our hand, we can take care of them to the satisfaction of both the blacks and whites.

I presume Howel Cobb, of Georgia, thinks the blacks have been treated as tenderly as the case would admit of. I think with Abraham Lincoln that if the government abandons the emancipated slave to the merciless cruelty of their old masters they deserve the hotest hell. Emancipation included the liberty and rights of citizens before the law. Their freedom has hardly been semi-nominal. I think that the Republicans had better insist upon all that the law and the constitution guarantees to the black man. When the South begins to respect the laws made to protect the black man then the government may remit some of the care they have over them. Grant's magnanimity came after the battle; not before it. Sugar plums should not be given to children until

they have done kicking and striking their mothers. The Democrats of the South are doing their utmost against the government as much as they were in 1862. Their opposition shows itself in the state laws that have driven more than 50,000 freed men out of their native states, who would have been glad to remain among their friends and homes. I hope General Garfield will make no concession until the South shows a disposition not to indulge in a political persecution that has driven hundreds of thousands from the polls and by tissue ballots and false counting has changed the political character of the state.

As a consequence Presidential electors and members of congress hold their offices that have no more right there, than you or I have. They have changed their tactics several times, but still no political party is allowed to exist but the Democratic party. And the bulldosing law is the strongest law of the land. It may be said that there are thousands in the South that are opposed to all this bulldosing-policy. If so why do they not unite and put it down? Some say they dare not. Then let us help them by restricting their hellish influence as best we can. The freedman in process of time will take care of his own right. And the South may find the harrow the other side up to their sorrow. The South has not yet atoned for starving twenty thousand prisoners to death.

A. Sabin.

CHAPTER VIII.

GLEANINGS.

MR. SABIN was accustomed to write out his meditations and opinions for the sake of fixing them in memory. Many of these scraps of writing have been preserved; and some of them are inserted here as indications of his thought, and forms of expression.

In addition some extracts from letters are given and condensed notes on various topics. Better than any other way, can we thus draw the lines of his mental picture, and preserve some historic memories in their native form.

The following unfinished account of his first wife was found among his papers. It has been deemed worth preserving as an indication of the strength and tenderness of his family traits. It bears the mark of having been written in 1877.

To my Children.—An account of your Mother.

As you were children, Anna but six months old and Dianthia but three and a half years old, she died. I have had it in my mind to pen a succinct history of your lovely and affectionate mother. Her particular history can not of course be recollected by either of you,

even for the last year of her life, and all before that must be summed up in what you have heard remarked by me and other friends. As I am an old man and have but a slender hold on life, and am in possession of some facts that it may be gratifying to the grandchildren to know, I have resolved that I would pen down some things at length, in such a form that if you should think them worth preserving you could do so. The penning of them will at least be gratifying to me. We doubly enjoy our friends, first, by associating with them, and second by our recollection of them; and sometimes the second is equal to the first. I was associated with the mother of my children a little more than twelve years after our marriage. I have enjoyed the recollection of her amiableness a little more than thirty-eight years. There is at all times in mind the memory of a young, sweet-tempered, affectionate mother of a little family of six children in whom her whole soul was bound up, and for whom she watched, labored and prayed incessantly. I love still to dream of her. I love still to think of her, and I often pray that her daughters and grand-daughters may be like her.

If she were now alive (1877) she would be an old woman of seventy-two years, but all my associations with her name are with a young woman several years the junior of my youngest daughter.

Her father, Rive Roswell Mears was born at Poultney, Vt., April 16, 1772. Her mother was Annie Glines.

Your mother was married in the twentieth year of her age, October 14, 1819, and she died on the 18th day of January, 1833. My acquaintance with her was from the time her father moved into Georgia in 1808.

They lived at the foot of the hill below our old house.

I well recollect the first time I ever saw her. She came with her brother Roswell to the hill on an errand. She was a little chubby girl of about eight years. She had on a brown home-wade woolen slip. Her skin was very white and her long brown hair hung over her shoulders contrasting beautifully with her large blue eyes and light complexion. She was of a light spirited happy turn of mind. The intercourse of the children of the two families was intimate and pleasant, and of long continuance.

In process of time an intimacy between her and myself of a somewhat particular character seemed to have grown out of an every day intercourse, until it was taken for granted by all the youth, and by the people generally that it would culminate in a union for life; but as she was only a child of twelve or fourteen, of course no propositions were made. I taught school in the Ballard district for seven winters in succession, and she attended school and boarded with some of the families of the district. There I learned that she had an unusual aptitude for acquiring a knowledge of what was taught in the school. I never saw a scholar who obtained so perfect a knowledge of all the steps in the solution of a problem in cube root in so short a time as she did.

She apprehended readily and retained what she learned indefinitely. Her progress in mathematics was unusually rapid. She went through Adams' Arithmetic and also studied Geometry and Trigonometry and Astronomy as taught in Furgerson's work on that subject.

As I began to study with a view to the ministry we had several select schools in town that were very excellent ones as I now think. These were continued for several years and finally ended in an incorporated Academy.

I carried the bill for the charter through the Legislature after I was a member. I now think that I was the principal originator of this school, as I saw no other way by which I could school myself but to originate one at my own door as it were. As I commenced the study of Latin, I persuaded Father Mears to let her board at our house and commence the study with me, and she did so. This she seemed to have a particular aptitude for acquiring. Her memory was much more retentive than my own, and the only apology I could make for myself, was that I had so many family cares and things to occupy my mind, that I could not give my undivided attention to the study as she could. When I began the study of Greek, she began also. In this she made rapid progress, and when I left for Philadelphia in December, 1817, she could read the Latin Reader, Virgil, Cicero's Orations, the Latin Testament, the Greek Reader and the Greek Testament, as well as most graduates that are not engaged in teaching. She read the Latin and Greek Testaments almost as readily as in the English. It used to be pleasureable to hear her read without translating, or translate without pronouncing the original. Pathenia had a somewhat like aptitude.

She had a pleasant countenance, and knew how to express herself affectionately to all with whom she had to do. Her acquaintances were affectionate friends. Her conversation was always pleasing. I ever remember the satisfaction it gave to hear her communicate her

feelings in church meeting. Her mind ran in that tender sympathetic strain which never failed to touch the heart of those who heard. The girls that lived at our house became life long friends.

Some Reflections on my ninety-first Birthday (October 23, 1884).

Not one in many thousands live to my great age. But few of those who do, retain their mental faculties so as to enjoy the society of their friends. Some loose their eye-sight and grope in darkness; others become deaf and look around on a mute and silent world; others are confined to beds on which they are destined to die; others forget the names and number of their own children, and fain would believe themselves far from home and among strangers in a strange land.

I have reason to be thankful to my Heavenly Father that my eye-sight is so good that with suitable glasses I read with pleasure several hours in a day. My hearing is so far impaired that I do not enjoy social conversation as much as I formerly did. I do not hear the conversation of the family not directed to me particularly. I can hear all public speaking by selecting a seat at a proper distance from the speaker, and one before his face. More depends on the speakers distinct articulation than on the loudness of his voice as to his being heard. I have not been able to attend the public worship of God but about one half of the time for a year past. I am obliged to have some one aid me in getting in and out of the carriage, and to drive the horses; but but when I am in I can ride several miles with pleasure.

As I was advanced in life before I came to Sycamore and past doing any business, I am a stranger in the state. The time has been when I knew men from every town in the state of Vermont; but here I do not know my nearest neighbor. I have heard it remarked by several old men in the new states that if it was to be done again, they would never leave the place where they spent the active part of their life. They must form a new character among young, active, business men, under great disadvantages; and a well earned reputation is of little avail among strangers. But most of the old men are drawn to the new states by the removal of their children on whom they are dependent for support in the decline of life; and as a choice between two evils. But it is a happy thought that they come to a land of plenty and their children are prospered and become wealthy.

Since the close of the past year my flesh and strength have been gradually failing, and the cough that has followed me much of the time has made me look like a walking skeleton.

I have cause for gratitude that my temporal circumstances are so good. I have no more concern about my living than a boy six years old. I am cared for as well as any one could desire: and I have confidence that it will be continued as long as I shall stand in need of it.

I have cause for gratitude to my Heavenly Father that my sight is such that I readily recognize my friends.

I am not troubled with dizziness or painful absent-mindedness. And, though my memory is more at fault than formerly, still facts, and names, and events, are

readily called to mind: so that I enjoy the conversation of friends, the reading of books, and the preaching of the gospel. I have reason to be thankful that I can steady my nerves to write so good a hand, and keep up so great a correspondence as I do with our large family scattered over the continent of America.

I am thankful for so large a circle of friends as are left me in my native state; and that I am so kindly remembered by them. Among them are not only my relatives, and Baptist friends, but Congregational friends, and Methodist friends, and especially young friends. In my adopted state and city I have also a limited number of friends, and I hope no enemies.

What is before me in the year upon which I have now entered I know not. If my life is prolonged, I shall have every day and night more or less pain of body and mind. I hope cheerfully to endure what is in evitable. And if it is the will of my Heavenly Father that this year shall be my last, I hope to be able to say, "Lord Jesus into thy hand I commend my spirit" when that hour shall come.

Family History.

About the year 1628, when Cardinal Richeleu besieged the Hugenot city of La Rochelle, France, and broke the strength of that Protestant kingdom within a Catholic realm, many Protestant families left their native country, and fled for peace and safety to foreign lands. Among the number was a young man of wealth and intelligence named William Sabin. Whether he married or not we have no means of knowing:

but only that he stopped for a time in Wales, and afterwards came to this country. He was settled in Rehoboth, Mass., in 1643. The records of the town show him to have been a leading spirit in church and school affairs. He had nine sons, and eleven daughters. He died in 1687, aged 67.

His son Benjamin was born May 3, 1646. He remained in Rehoboth until 1675 when he removed to Roxbury, Mass. In 1686 he was one of thirteen who settled Woodstock; and in the same year joined with others in buying a tract of land where now stands the town of Pomfret. And in 1705 he moved to the latter place where he died 1725, aged 79 years.

Of his eleven children, Timothy, the youngest, was born in 1694 and lived in Pomfret until he died in 1780, aged 86.

Of his nine children Ichabod was born 1726 and died in Pomfret 1783 aged 57. The children of Ichabod Sabin were as follows: Mary, born 1750; Sarah, 1753; Nathanael, 1754; Patience, 1756; Parthenia, 1758; Timothy, 1761; Daniel, 1763; Anna, 1765; Benjamin, Nov. 21, 1767. Of these w. have information showing that Timothy moved to near Cooperstown, N. Y.; Patience died yong; Anna married Henry Ballard afterwards of Georgia, Vt.; Benjamin moved to Pownall, Vt.; and in 1790 or '91 to Georgia, Vt.; where he died in 1796. This Benjamin Sabin was the father of Rev. Alvah Sabin.

His wife was Polly, daughter of Robert McMaster of Williamstown, Mass., a man of Scotch descent. Of the family history Rev. Anson Titus, of South Weymouth, Mass., who has carefully searched the records and published his results, writes, "The Sabin family is one of most excellent history. I have found few black sheep

among them and the greater part of them have been prominent workers in the church. For so many who were active in church I have found only a small proportion of ministers: but of Deacon Sabins there are a host which no man can number."

Of the record on the mother's side the following is taken from notes written by Father Sabin in 1883. "I have known but little of my Grandfather McMasters' family. I have heard of one brother.

"My grandmother's maiden name was Katie Young. She was of Irish descent and one of a large family. She had one brother, Ruben Young, who was a wealthy farmer in Williamstown, Mass.—One sister married a Mr. Bliss in Weston, Mass., and had a large family, several of whom settled in Georgia, Vt., namely: Fredrick, Abner, Solomon, Eli, Moses and Reuben. The daughters were Mrs. Young Blair, Mrs. Sherwick Weeks, Mrs. Hawley Witters, Mrs. Betsey Blair, second wife of Young Blair. Another of my grandmother's sisters married Stephen Davis. Their children were Moses, Stephen and Young, Polly, wife of Fredrick Bliss, ———, wife of Solomon Bliss, Patty, Robert Wightman's wife, Anna, Fredrick Newton's wife, ———, Luther Taylor's wife.

The children of Grandfather McMaster, uncles and aunts of mine, were Moses, Rebecca, Polly, (my mother,) Young, Betsy, Katie, and John. Uncle Moses married Olive Smedley and moved to Fairfax, Vt.

Aunt Rebecca married Edmund Lamb. Their children were Osmand, Heman, Horace, Rebecca, ———, wife of ———, Robinson, Alantha, wife of Sidney Bliss, Samantha, Houghton Ballard's wife, Dana, afterwards a minister, and Nelson.

Young lived on his father's farm and died there.

Betsy married Abel Johnson and came to live in Georgia. The children were Olive, Horace, Asahel, David, Adeline.

Aunt Katie married Noble Clark and lived in Niagara Co., N. Y.

Uncle John came to live with my widowed mother in the spring of 1807, being then 19 years old. He remained with us until 1811; he then married Diadama Knight, who lived on North Hero, an island in Lake Champlain.

I state these facts as they lie floating in my memory. They may be of little account to any but the relatives. I know that even my own children have but the slightest knowledge of their relationship to this large and complicated family, and it is to satisfy any who may be inquisitive that I record these things; and there is no other one living who can state them. If the statement is useless it has cost me but little.

Some Facts in Relation to My Mother.

My mother was Polly McMaster, born at Williamstown, Mass., June 18, 1770, married Benjamin Sabin in Williamstown, Mass., Jan., 1792, being then 22 years old and was left a widow four years afterward, May 11, 1796. Her husband, my father, died suddenly with bilious colic, away from home. He went with some of his neighbors to catch fish in Lake Champlain, but before they reached the lake he was taken sick and stopped at Joshua Smedley's where he died before midnight, and was brought home the next day. Mother went on foot

to him through the woods in the night over rough paths and pole bridges. I was then two years and a half old, and my brother Daniel six months old.

I think the farm my father left was paid for; at least I never heard of any debt afterwards. Mother was obliged to break up housekeeping, and went to live with Uncle Henry Ballard, who married my Aunt Anna Sabin. While she was living there she became acquainted with Mr. Edmund Town, Esq., of Fairfield, a man of some note. He was the first town clerk of that town, and was for many years Justice of the Peace, and was chosen to represent the town in the state legislature. He was a widower with two sons, Edmund Brewer, and John. My mother was married to him November 7, 1797, and went to Fairfield to live on the farm of her husband. In the year 1800 my stepfather sold his farm and moved on to my mother's in Georgia. The family then consisted of Grandmother Lewis, mother of his first wife, my mother, Edmund Brewer, and John, Town, Daniel (my brother), myself, and the baby, (Lydia Town, afterwards Aunt Lydia Holmes). Aug. 24, 1800, my stepfather died leaving my mother a widow the second time with the addition of four to the family. And three months afterward a daughter was born who was named Polly. She married Cyrus Hotchkiss. The boy Edmund Brewer went to live with Fredrick Bliss, and afterwards to Boston where he married, raised a family and died.

John lived with Uncle Henry Ballard, and afterwards learned the house-builders trade of Samuel Fairbanks. He married Anna Jackson, and raised four boys: Brewer, Franklin, Byron, and Henry; and two girls: Mary Ann, and Caroline.

The farm was managed at first by Uncle Ballard; afterwards by uncle Noble Clark who married mother's sister, Katie. But the management was not satisfactory, and mother assumed it herself. She made herself acquainted with the value of all the articles of trade or barter which a farmer of that time was likely to buy or sell. It was soon found that her judgment was as good as most men's. Some of the prices of that day I remember. A cow was rented for three years to be returned with a heifer, both with calves by their sides; and the renter insured them against all accident except lightning or the fall of a green tree. Or a cash rent was paid of four dollars. A yoke of two year old steers was rented to be returned in three years well broke for service. Sheep were rented for one year for one pound of wool per head. At these rents mother usually kept an hundred sheep, and twenty cows, and occasionally a yoke of steers.

In my long experience I have been acquainted with many widowed families and have seen much suffering in consequence of ignorance concerning the value of property and the ways of business. Some men do not let their wives know any thing about their business; and if they are left widows they are mere children with a family to support and debts to pay with no help from any one. The shop is locked up, the business is closed and she, as if blindfolded, is left to do double duty. The better way is to do things by mutual consultation. In some cases the wife will be as good a financier as the husband.

Mother used to spin wool and flax. She bought a patent wheel with two spindles and two distaffs, and could with that spin nearly two day's work in one. But

it required so much strength to turn it that she broke down in health under the strain and was unable to do any thing for five or six years; but she afterwards recovered. One thing she always had for consolation: her boys always endeavored to work with her and never opposed her. When young we were obedient, and when older delighted to make her happy and cheerful. She was anxious that we should have the advantages of education; but her means were limited, and the opportunities at home were not as good as they are in these days of public high schools. For a long period it was her custom to sit down with us and help us solve the problems in the "Siderial Compendium," "Adam's Arithmetic," and "Pike's Arithmetic." Although she had never studied these books before, she would solve the problems like a strong-minded student. With her assistance we kept ourselves ahead of our class, and our instruction was better than we could get in the schools of the town. She kept us in school as much as practicable and, that we might not be detained to cut it, she would use as little wood as possible in the household affairs, going without fire even for this purpose.

In 1825, the 25th of May, Mrs. Town married Solomon Bliss. Of this Father Sabin used to say that as he was at that time a minister he was called upon to marry his mother to this new husband: and this enabled him to say to his grandchildren that he married their great-grandmother, grandmother and their mother, and them selves. Capt. Bliss lived until Sept. 5, 1834. Mrs. Bliss died Aug. 12, 1858, at the home of her son Alvah, aged 88 years, remembered by all as a woman of rare qualities, pleasant, thoughtful, fitted in mind and

heart to be intrusted with the training of sons called of God to be preachers of his word.

Boyish Military Tastes.

The annual June training, held on first Tuesday in June, was a kind of State institution in Vermont from its organization until after the war of 1812. The military consisted of the militia (or flood wood companies as they were called); light infantry, composed of volunteers enlisted from the militia; the horse troop; and the artillery companies. These all had to appear on the notable first day of June with musket, cartridge box, priming wire, and two flints. But a uniform dress was not required of the militia. The light infantry had a uniform. The artillery had a cannon found by the state, and the artillery man had a sword and uniform. Besides the June training the Brigadier General called out the regiment in the fall of each year for general training.

Not many years ago a man who was a young major at the time related to me an ancedote that showed that the officers were not always the most perfect instructors in the tactics. He said that he went to the General on muster day and asked for instructions about forming the regiment and the various positions of the troop, the artillery, the light infantry, and the militia. The old General who had been Major and Colonel and Brigadier General and Inspecting Major for perhaps thirty years, assuming a pompous voice said, "Major —mount your horse—draw your sword—cut around—and make a great fuss—that is all there is of it." This

might be an exceptional case, but it probably was not the only one. Some use discretion in concealing their ignorance.

There were many strange occurrences. But notwithstanding of these the June trainings and general musters were a kind of holiday which every community must have in one shape or another. In later years the "cattle shows" made a very good substitute for them.

Before the war of 1812 the military spirit was cultivated to a high degree. This was evident from disposition of the boys to form themselves into military companies. At least it had that effect on my mind. About 1809 I organized an artillery company of about fifty boys, and fitted up a boy's cart in the rudest manner with drag ropes and the barrel of an old gun for a cannon. Each boy had a wooden sword, and a pasteboard Bonaparte hat with a feather. When the militia were called out I called out, my company also. We chose officers in a legal manner. I had the unanimous vote for captain.

I had procured a book of military tactics containing the musket and sword exercise. I practiced behind the barn, and in the lots, until as I now think, I understood it as well as any man in the town of Georgia. When we came out on training days we attracted more attention and caused more remarks than the three companies of men. It was suggested by some one that we ought to have a new gun carriage. So I started a subscription for that purpose and presented it to old men as well as young, and soon had enough to pay for a new carriage. And some one gave me the lower half of an old "Queen's arm," which made a very good gun. I drilled the boys until they were quite ex-

pert in the exercises. In 1811 I became old enough to do military duty, and enlisted in Captain Solomon Bliss' Light Infantry Company.

The first day we were called out after I enlisted, I was chosen fourth corporal and by the captain was called out as a "Fugleman," that is I stood in the front of the company with my back towards them, and all were to perform the exercise as I did. I was afterward appointed Sergeant, then successively Ensign and Captain. I held the latter office until I was licensed to preach, and that ended my little militaty career.

An Old Subscription.

I send you a copy of subscriptions circulated in the year 1848 for my support as a specimen of some others; and to show who were the men that then composed the society and about what they would pay. They are nearly all dead now. This is as large a sum as was ever found on any subcription. It reads as follows:

We, the subscribers, wishing to obtain the service of Elder A. Sabin as preacher of the gospel statedly at the Baptist meeting house on the Sabbath, do severally promise to pay annually the sums annexed to our names:

Provided, that any subscriber may alter his subscription at the close of the year by paying arrearages.

GEORGIA, February 10, 1848.

NAMES.	SUM.
Cyrus Hotchkiss	$20 00
John Bowker	20 00
H. H. Hale	20 00

NAMES.	SUM.
Alburn Mears	10 00
Asaph Wood	5 00
Ebenezer Wood	10 00
Alfred Ladd	15 00
Amos Ives	5 00
G. H. Roice	5 00
Wm. A. Blake	5 00
George W. Blake	5 00
Jonathan Blake	5 00
Joseph Bowker	2 00
Jonathan Hews	2 00
Jedediah Chritchet	2 00
Enoch White	2 00
Valmore Story	1 00
Emily M. Bowker	10 00
B. L. Dinsmore	1 00
Charles B. Wilson	1 00
Daniel Dinsmore	2 00
Martin Curtis	3 00
Roswell Goodwin	5 00
Charles Williams	2 00
F. and B. Town	20 00
Reuben B. Ayres	1 00
Bursis Hill	1 00
James B. Dunton	2 00
Stephen Bliss	2 00
Hawley Witters	2 00
Thomas Pierce	2 00
A. M. Martin	1 00
Wm. K. Warner	2 00
Charles I. Ladd	2 00
Horace Witters	8 00
Solomon Bliss	5 00
Abel Bliss	2 00
Jefferson Fletcher	1 00
Samuel Barber	2 00
James Godfrey	4 00
Elijah Davis	5 00

NAMES.	SUM.
Samuel Fargo	1 00
Elisha Hale	1 00
David Goodrich	2 00
Henry Bushnell	1 00
Moses Wightman	3 00
Samuel Carr	5 00
Henry G. Goodrich	2 00
Stephen Holmes	5 00
Douglass K. Holmes	3 00
Russel S. Hawkins	2 00
M. H. Torrey	2 00
Denison Waller	10 00
M. D. Waller	2 00
John Hurlburt	2 00
Stillman Clark	10 00
Betsy Bliss	1 00
Rebecca Bliss	1 00
B. F. Sabin	2 00
Denis Gilmore	2 00
E. L. Ladd	2 00
Leonard Wheeler	1 00
C. H. Morrill	1 00
I. W. Burt	1 00

This was the last subscription gotten up for my support. I think it amounted to about three hundred dollars, and for a year or two was punctually paid. But soon some moved away, some died, some forgot the dollar or two they had signed. And I could not tell how much I was to expect. Then in 1852 I was appointed to Congress, and after that I do not recollect that any subscription was ever circulated. After 1857 the people gave me several donation visits and remembered me at their Christmas festival and drew my fire wood to the door, and most of the older members of the church and society paid what they had long been in the habit of paying annually.

On his Entrance to Congress.

In December, 1853, I went to Washington for the first time. I felt as green as a boy. I had had some experience in the state legislature; but this was all new. In a financial view it was an epoch in my affairs. I had all my life labored for a sum that barely paid my expenses. I had always felt like a poor man; and yet had been obliged to keep up as good an appearance as I could so as not to shame my friends. But now I had the prospects of accumulating something for the benefit of my family, and the payment of my debts, and the money I borrowed to go to Washington.

In 1821 I had been on the road from Philadelphia to Georgia, and had travelled from Albany to Whitehall on foot, because I had not money to pay for my passage, with my feet so galled that I crippled like an old foundered horse, and walked in constant pain. Now I received eighty cents per mile from the government to pay my expenses amounting to $505; and $8.00 a day for service was a new experience for me; and I confess that I lost several hours of sleep for several nights under the excitement caused by this new state of my affairs.

I soon found myself able to pay all my debts, and I did so as fast as I could. It was gratifying to me to be able also to help some of my friends to small sums, and to be able to contribute to several charitable and benevolent institutions. I can now say that from that day to this I have kept myself clear from personal debts, but I have in a few cases been holden for others. I have for twenty years past been able to put my hand in my pocket and pay every dollar I owed.

I confess that I have not always been discreet in disbursement of moneys I have received. But I was sixty years old before I had a chance to make an experiment. I did not spend it in drinking, nor smoking, nor gambling, nor speculating, nor in dress, nor fine carriages, nor in luxuries.

Concerning His Leaving Georgia.

My reason for terminating my long pastorate in the Baptist church at Georgia is this:

My age was one at which in almost every case prudent men have long before retired. I did not leave because of any opposition to myself in the church or society, or in the town. I have never had any difficulty with any one, and when I left town I do not know as there was a person in town who desired it. The Congregational Church had treated me as kindly as I could desire; the Methodists paid me all the respect that I deserved; my intimacy with the young people was continued to the last, and was very gratifying to my aged heart.

In many instances when the young people have gotten together for a social visit they have sent a team and invited me to attend with them as if I was a kind of compliment to their social meetings. And often would make a little contribution, as if to pay me for my trouble of attending, when it was as gratifying to me as it was to them.

Relation to the New Hampton Institution.

The following statement of views on the removal of the New Hampton Institution to Fairfax, Vt., was found among his papers.

My opinion of the whole matter is about this: In the first place it was a great mistake to attempt the removal. I think all similar attempts have been failures. The effort to remove the Hamilton Seminary to Rochester failed; the removal of the Theological Institution from Philadelphia to Washington failed; the attempt to consolidate Burlington and Middlebury Colleges did not succeed, for neither would consent to a removal. It would have been much better to start anew. It is doubtful whether the title to the real estate is not always forfeited by the removal of an Institution.

Second: The people of the vicinity were bitterly opposed to the removal. The books were spirited away by hundreds; but a small part of the apparatus was ever brought to Fairfax; and not a foot of the real estate was secured.

Third: Another Institution started in the same place managed by the Free-Will Baptists, and was sustained by the same community which had supported the first school.

Fourth: It was a mistake to appoint the teachers and bring them to Fairfax, and begin the school before the house was built.

Fifth: It was not good policy to borrow money of the Endowment Fund to build or to defray the expenses of the school.

Sixth: The Institution should not have been started without at least six or eight thousand dollars on hand to meet its immediate wants. The Board had not a dollar, nor the promise of a dollar to meet the bills which must be paid immediately. They sent out agents to solicit aid, but those who must give were the very ones who had just subscribed to the Endowment Fund. But little could therefore be obtained. The only alternative was to borrow money; and the Board borrowed it. Some members paid a hundred dollars a year, and others less amounts; and still the debt pressed heavily. Finally the disaffected members withdrew their counsel and aid. The acting Board resigned, and by common consent the disaffected members were elected to conduct the school in a better way if they could. At this time Dr. Upham was at the head of the school.

In the transfer of the management to the new Board my name was carried over at their request; and I continued with them until Dr. Upham resigned his position.

The new Board pursued the same policy in paying debts as was pursued by the old one; and I had no need to change my views. I acted cheerfully in both Boards and made the best of the plans adopted that I could. I heartily believed in the honest intention of all. But the funds were never sufficient to warrant the beginning of a school of so great dimensions.

I think the annual subscription to the general fund was estimated at too high a figure. It was subscribed in small amounts by men in moderate circumstances and scattered over a great territory. Many were slow in paying; some died and the claim was not presented to the Commissioners who settled the estates; some moved

to the far west; some became disaffected and did not mean to pay. I think that all such subscriptions are worth not more than fifty cents on a dollar. An effort was made to have the subscribers give notes payable to the Treasurer of the school with annual interest. This partially succeeded.

The Board had to appoint a general agent to collect the interest and pay the debts; and this cost five or six hundred dollars a year which must be paid punctually.

I can say for my part that I have suffered as much by our inability to pay the debts of the school, as I should in going through bankruptcy five times.

I travelled hundreds of miles by night and day, through mud, and snow, and heat, and cold, to attend the meetings of the Board, and of the Executive Committee; for which I never received a cent a compensation.

But while the pecuniary interests of the Institution were disastrous and to me as to all painful, I was cheered by the character of the school. It was most satisfactory. It was a blessed thing for the community, and the churches, and individuals. If the school was a failure from a pecuniary point of view, nevertheless the blessing counterbalances the loss which any individuals may have sustained.

A Figure, Showing the Folly of Criticizing the Purposes of God.

The objection is, if God foreknows and predetermines what He will do, we are not free agents and are not ac-

countable for our conduct. The fact is none but God foreknows and none but God foreordains. As we have not the faculty to foresee, we can not see how it can comport with our free agency, nor is it possible to explain this to us in the absence of this faculty of foreknowledge.

To illustrate: Suppose two men were both born blind, but possessed of all the other faculties common to mankind, as hearing, feeling, tasting, smelling. They hear a great deal about the beauty of the rainbow, and of the flowers and that there are seven distinct colors in the rainbow; and that when all these are blended it makes a perfect white; and that the absence of all these is a perfect black. They feel the warmth of the sun; they hear others speak of its brightness; they hear of the beauty of the starry heavens. Now suppose these two men were comparing their views as to what was a scarlet color. That there was such a thing as color they could not doubt, for thousands testify to the fact. The first should give it as his opinion that a scarlet color resembles the sound of a trumpet, the other should think it resembles the sound of a bass drum. Then they refer the question to a man who has the sense of sight. He says to them, "You are both as wrong as you can be." "Well," they say, "can you not set us right?" "No, I can not set you right." They might say, "Have we not common sense to understand what is said to us?" "You have common sense, all but the sense of seeing, and that you have not; and can have no conception of colors. And I can no more tell you what color is than you can tell a deaf mute what sound is."

The lower orders of animals have instincts that in the main dictate them as if they had the faculty of reasoning. But still we know they can not compare one thing with another; they never make a bargain with each other, and have no idea of the comparative value of things.

The bird in building her nest may seem to use reason in its construction; but the fact is not so; she makes the first just as well as she does the last; she does not improve by experience, nor by the example of others, and no human being can teach her.

The beaver has a very strong and definite instinct as seen in his selecting the place on the stream to build his dam, and in his mode of constructing it, he put it at the lower extremity of a low, flat plat of land, and where the stream is narrow. Then gnaws down small trees, draws them to the place selected, and puts them in with the buts up the stream, and on these he deposits leaves and mud and muck and makes a dam that will be strengthened by the deposits of the stream and will stand for a hundred years. The rules of their corporation are varied and complete as a railroad corporation. Still all this perfect planning and execution and co-operation was never taught them, and they never learned it any more than a tree was taught how to grow or an infant how to suck.

This innumerable class of beings have not the faculty of reasoning, and we can not reason with them, nor can we tell them what reasoning faculties are any more than we can tell a blind man what colors are, or a deaf man what sounds are. If we had the power to foreknow then we could criticize the providence of the omniscient God; but not till then.

Relations with General O. E. Babcock.

When Mr. Sabin was in Congress, it was his privilege to secure the appointment of O. E. Babcock as cadet in West Point. In this young man he always maintained a lively interest. In later years an intimate acquaintance and correspondence sprang up which lasted until death.

After Mr. Babcock came to positions of good pay, he uniformly sent a Christmas gift varying from $50 to $100, and after the General's death Mrs. Babcock continued the remembrance, sending one but a month before the death of Mr. Sabin.

When the General's children became old enough they were taught to love and venerate the old time friend of their father. They wrote letters and sent presents in their own name. When the family were in Chicago, Mr. Sabin visited them. He wrote their names in the family record of his Bible, and delighted to call them his grandchildren. He studied carefully the reports of light house work, which the General kindly sent him, and no one delighted more in the accuracy of his reports, and their full acceptance by the department than did this adopted father of his. During the years of political calumny, no heart was hurt more by the charges, and insinuations against the General than Father Sabin's. We give an account of a visit to the General in Washington in 1873:

"Previous to the meeting at the Naval school I went to Washington, and put up at Willard's. The next morning I went to the White House and inquired for General Babcock, but found that he and the President

were at Springfield, Mass., but would be at home the next day.

"I then went to the meeting-house built by Amos Kendall for the Baptist church, N. W. of the Patent Office (Calvary Church). I found Dr. Parker in the study and had a pleasant interview with him. The next morning I went to the Treasury and found Stephen A. Mirick, with whom I boarded when in Congress, and made a farewell visit to him and his excellent wife. Then I went again to see General Babcock. Going into he office I found him engaged. So I sat down until he was at liberty. He seemed greatly surprised that he did not recognize me at first glance and attend to me at once. He said he was looking for an older man. He sent for the President and introduced me as a special friend of his. Before I left Willard's that morning I found that the General had been there and paid my bill of $10.00, and now he engaged a carriage and took me to his house where I met his wife and son again.

"I remained his guest while I was in the city. He drove me through the streets which he had leveled as Street Commissioner, and through the public places of interest. On Sunday we attended Dr. Parker's church and on Monday we parted for the last time probably."

[We think that this was written soon after the event and that he visited the General after this in Chicago. The correspondence became more and more familiar after that, and the growth of the children strengthened the ties of friendship.—ED.]

CHAPTER IX.

THE GATES AFFAIR.

It would be pleasanter for us to pass over the event of this chapter, and let a sad affair of long ago die out in the lapse of years. But there are reasons why we feel constrained to mention it in this work. It was a fact. It was a long and to some unmeasured extent an influence in his life. Not all have forgotten it. In reply to a letter of inquiry from the writer to a prominent man in Georgia in 1881, the following was received: "The public opinion of the shooting affair was drawn pretty closely to a political line. One side justified the shooting and the other did not. I recently asked a man who lived here at that time about the matter and he flew all to pieces over it." And in addition it seemed to be a desire of Mr. Sabin that his side of it should be known. It had never been talked of in his family; what we knew of it was gained from others. But in the last days of his life he seemed anxious to speak of it. The following account is based upon statements taken down from his lips a few days before he died:

In the war of 1812 the third brigade of the Vermont militia was called into the field and sent to the west side of Lake Champlain to keep back the British troops in any attempt to enter from Canada. There was much objection to this. It was not a militia man's duty to go beyond the state lines. The Governor ordered them

back; but the brigade did not think best to desert their commanders as a body, and therefore remained, though individuals went home. There were many who thought that even if there was a necessity for Vermont troops to be called into the defense of the great state of New York, yet it was not wise to take the entire force from the county of Franklin and leave the forty miles of its own Canadian border without defense. Added to these were many who were not in sympathy with the war, and they were ready, as the copperheads in the great rebellion of 1861 were, to hinder the war and find fault with any measure of the war party. Nevertheless the militia were called to New York, and among them went Alvah Sabin, of Georgia, and Silas Gates, of St. Albans. They were mustered into service at Burlington, and that same night went to the lake, and waded across the "sand-bar," then in boats were conveyed to Cumberland Head, from there they went to Chazee. In the course of the journey these two young men met for the first time, so there was no chance for the accusation that any former difficulty was involved in the case.

The opposition to the service was so great that half the regiment of which these men were members deserted, and went to their homes to care for their farms which were suffering by reason of their absence. The officers found it necessary to check the desertion, and Alvah Sabin was sent with Sergeant Henry Gibbs to bring back one of them. They went to the house of Silas Gates, and told him their business. He submitted to the military arrest, but asked leave to go and get his horse. Gibbs went with him to do this and Sabin awaited their return. It had been determined by both Gibbs and Sabin that it was not wise to take him through

St. Albans, because there was a strong party hostility between Georgia and that town owing to the interests each had in the war. St. Albans was profiting by the smuggling trade from Canada, while Georgia was disposed to collect the duty. Gates wanted to escape, of course. He asked leave to get some things to take with him and as he must go into the house Gibbs said to Sabin, "I will go in with him and do you stand here and see that there is no dodging." As the two went in Gates taking advantage of the darkness turned aside from the straight way through the hall, and, going through a bed room while Gibbs was fumbling about in a strange house, jumped out of a window and ran across the field. Sabin heard the window fall, and stepped around the corner in time to see his prisoner running twenty rods off. He did what was his first duty as a soldier, fired at him, alas! with too true an aim. The ball went in at the side of the spine and came out in front. He died five days after, but not until he had expressed his forgiveness toward his unfortunate fellow soldier. The news spread like fire and soon there were seventy-five men gathered mostly of the opposite party and meditating violence. But the final decision was to let the law take its course. He was taken to the jail, and put into a dark cell and kept over night. It was a most wretched and terrible night. He knew that the wound was fatal, and that he had killed a fellow man. His heart was not used to crime nor the contemplation of it. He was not an old soldier accustomed to the sight of carnage. He had never been in battle. A case of manslaughter in that region would stir the whole community with horror, and him, tender hearted as he was, most of all. And he was face to face with his

deed all night. Added to this was the uncertainty of his own fate. He might be hung, his family be disgraced, and moreover his future in the next life was in doubt. He was a Christian, but he had done a deed which had never been in his thought; and whether he would lose his soul for it was a matter of grave concern. The terrible night made impression on him that he never overcame. He always feared to be alone in the dark. Often during his life did he say that he would not stay in a house alone over night for much money. If there are or were any who held a grudge against him for the act, could they know how the experience of that night stuck in his sensitive soul like an arrow in a wounded deer and gave him pain that never ceased, they would say that he had "received double for all his sin."

In the morning a number of men came up from Georgia to see him. They said at once that he must be taken out of the cell and put in a debtors prison. "The facts," said they "are all known, and it is only a question of whether he was in the line of his duty or not. Put him in a debtor's prison, and we will not make any attempt to release him. But we will not submit to have him in that cell." It was well understood that the men of Georgia were resolute; and with the feeling about the war it would have been any easy matter to kindle a strife between the towns over this case. He was therefore put in a debtor's prison. He told his friends how he suffered that night, and the young men of Georgia arranged that one of their number should go up and stay with him each night that he was there.

An incident occurred while he was awaiting his trial which shows the man. The jail caught fire in the night.

The jailer called for help and removed some of the prisoners to places of safety or put them under guard in the yard. But to him he said, "Now Sabin you go and help us put this fire out; and when I call you come." So he went and fought fire until it was out. Some of his friends said to him, "Now is your time! Come on." But he said "No, I will not run away." Finally the jailer stood up on the steps and called "Sabin, come!" "Here I am," and he went back to prison. We are not sure but this is as good an example of trustworthiness as John Bunyan's going alone from jail to the town of his trial, and then returning to his prison again.

Judge Whitmore came to ask him if he wanted any legal help and offered his services. Aldis and Gadcomb and Cornelius Van Ness were also engaged in his defence.

An indictment for manslaughter was made by the grand jury and a prosecution was begun before Judge Hoyt. At the request of friends Judge Farnsworth, of Fairfax, was joined in the case, it being well known that Judge Hoyt was opposed to the war. He himself magnanimously agreed to have an associate. By consent of counsel the case was taken to the Supreme Court and bail granted until that should set.

In December, 1813, the case came to trial and the jury disagreed, three for "acquittal," and nine for "manslaughter." It was brought up again in December, 1814, and resulted in another disagreement; but the jury was now nine for acquittal and three for manslaughter.

In December, 1815, by mutual consent of counsel, the political feeling having subsided, a *nolle prosequi* was

entered by the state and he was accordingly discharged.

This was not fully satisfactory to him. He used to feel that the rceord of the court was not as clear as he would be glad to have it. Could he have had a trial and been acquitted it would in his judgment have been better.

We do not think that this matter gave him any anxiety about his future hope. He said that he not only had no malice, but that the people of St. Albans had seemed to think he was not censurable for it. They had been active in his support in all the political honors that had been given him. And yet he said there had been a feeling with him that he ought to stay in Georgia and make his record and establish his character among the very people who knew the case. And we do not doubt that this feeling had much to do with his refusal to leave there, although he might have done so to great temporal advantage.

To his family it has been a sad thing for his sake but with these statements we are content to leave the case in the hands of just public sentiment.

CHAPTER X.

NOTES OF A FUNERAL SERMON PREACHED AT GEORGIA, MAY 14, 1839.

TEXT: Psalm 27 : 10.

When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take (*gather*) *me up.*

Confidence may be reposed in Divine Providence in times of our greatest extremity. As was said of Asher in the blessing of Moses (Deut. 33:25) so may it be said of the afflicted and forlorn. "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days so shall thy strength be." The adage is, "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb.' God by the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah exhorts dying fathers (Jer. 49:1), "Leave thy fatherless children, and let thy widows trust in me."

By Divine Providence we understand "the foresight, superintendence, and timely care of God over created beings." This care in all ordinary cases is exercised toward creatures through a system of well regulated means. For example: Parents must support their children; brethren shall care for the members of their own community.

God effects this superintendence in a way that calls for the exercise of all the good graces of the virtuous part of the community. It was not his design to make promises of such a nature as to produce sloth, indolence and insensibility on the part of the creature; but the contrary virtues, vigilance, activity and the liveliest

sympathy. God regards the happiness of good men too highly to rob them of the luxury of being the instruments of effecting his benevolent designs. That is a false confidence which says, "be ye warm, and be ye filled," while it refrains from giving to the poor what is needful for their bodies.

With all the means that have been provided for the needy and distressed, there is still occasion for strong faith to enable us to lay hold of that degree of consolation necessary to sustain us under the dark providences of God.

Among all classes of men to whom the providence of God extends, toward none is it more dark and mysterious than toward the class brought to view in the text, namely: those forsaken of father and mother and cast forlorn upon the wide world. Such were called Orphans. Not all who nominally come under this head are entitled to an equal share of our sympathy. A knowledge of their relative conditions is necessary to determine the strength of their claims.

We inquire first who are Orphans? Those bereft of father, or mother, or both; by death, or removal, or some uncontrolable providence, such as war, or desertion. Those who are in their years of majority, and capable of providing for themselves have no claims on us. Childhood blessed with capable friends, disposed to exercise paternal care need not so much exite our sympathy. Such may be the subsequent relation formed by the surviving parent, if one there is, as may relieve us from our solicitations. But it is the parentless, friendless, penniless orphan in childhood that awakens in our breasts the full toned, and the whole round of sympathy that turns the head to waters, and the eyes

to fountains of tears. But even this class are permitted to hope, and their friends for them may hope, that when their *father and mother forsake them then the Lord will take them up.*

We now propose to point out some of the guards and protections provided by the Divine Providence as substitutes for those exercised by natural parents. Before we discuss this it may be proper to preface a few things, lest more be expected from Providence than he has promised.

(1.) God has not promised to make any orphan wealthy in the things of this life.

(2.) He has not promised to make them all literary men.

(3.) He has not promised to exempt them from the natural evils that fall to the common lot of children blessed with parents.

(4.) He has not promised that the wicked influences that parents may have exerted over their children while they were alive shall cease to produce their bad effect as soon as they are dead.

(5.) He has not relieved the orphan from the obligation, binding upon all youth, to obey God and all the reasonable injunctions of those who have the rule over them.

(6.) He has not promised the orphan sound friends and respectability in life on any other condition than that proposed to all other youth.

(7.) He has not promised salvation to the orphan on any other terms than those proposed to all men.

With this preface we propose to point out some of the guards and protections thrown around the orphan.

I. *God has solemnly enacted laws, to which he has affixed awful penalties, which guarantee protection to the fatherless.* God said to Israel, "Ye shall not afflict any woman or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry, and my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless." (Ex. 22:22.)

Affliction includes several things. This command means, Thou shalt not afflict the fatherless by producing exaggerated and unjust accounts against their estate.

Thou shalt not take advantage of their ignorance of business and the value of property.

Thou shalt not entice them into by and forbidden paths because they have none to guide them in the path of duty.

Thou shalt not vex them by circulating slanderous reports concerning them.

Thou shalt not vex them by passing discouraging opinions of them, such as, 'They are spoiled children;' 'he will make nothing;' 'they will come to ruin.'

II. *God has sweetly pledged himself to protect them.* (Deut. 10:18). God executeth the judgment of the fatherless and the widows and the stranger in giving him food and raiment.

(Ps. 146:9.) God relieveth the fatherless and the widows.

(Ps. 68:5.) A father of the fatherless and a judge of the widows is God in his holy habitation. (Ps. 10:15).

(Hosea 14:3.) Thou art the helper of the fatherless. For in thee the fatherless find mercy. All these express and implied promises are made by one who has power, wisdom, goodness and truth. He has stayed

the vials of his wrath from being poured upon a people until the cup of their iniquity has been filled by trampling on the rights of the fatherless.

It was given by Isaiah as a reason for troubles; "they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them, therefore, saith the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, the Mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries and avenge me of mine enemies." (Jer. 7:6.) "If ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless and the widow, * * then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers forever and ever." Thus implying that oppression of the needy would cause their expulsion from the land of their fathers.

III. *God has made compassion to the orphan an indispensible evidence of the genuineness of our piety.*

(James 1:27.) "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the father is this: To visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Job in the midst of his affliction was permitted to have hope because he delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him.

IV. *God has implanted in the breast a sympathy that guards with vigilance the rights of the orphan.*

(1.) It opens the doors of comfort and competency to their reception.

(2.) It prepares an asylum for their comfort.

(3.) It calls down the blessing of God. Who ever put his hand on the head of a little orphan boy and did not virtually say, 'God bless you, my son?" Who ever kissed the cheek of a little orphan girl and did not pray the Lord to preserve the sweet child of sorrow?

(4.) It seems as if God designed good concerning them in giving them a name whose very sound is music. "The little orphan boy—the little orphan girl." The story entitled the children in the wood will live when the hills have grown old, because it awakens sympathy for the orphan.

Oh, could the spirit of the departed mother whose remains lie before us, be permitted to show itself, a smile would be on its countenance as it remembers the protection that God has made for orphans, and hears a plea for justice and sympathy in behalf of these her lonely weeping children.

The above is one of the few sermons of an early date whose notes were written and preserved. It is plain that he did not study "economy of material." It shows the habit of proving things by scripture; a cautious logical mind; a practical application of truth; and a tender sympathy. We find no sermon of his which presents truthfully so many traits as this does. If the reader will remember that these notes were not with him in the pulpit, and think of a tall, well built man, standing squarely on both feet behind the pulpit, with strong, pleasant voice seizing his topic with confidence at the first sentence; speaking with a tone that revealed a certainty of conviction, without assuming dictatorial accents; depending on his words, not on gesture, or acting of any sort; and filling up this analysis with a full flow of words chosen from the simple vocabulary of the farmers to whom he spoke, with the softening of tone, and moistening of eyes which was genuine, not cultivated, he will have a good conception of this preacher.

CHAPTER XI.

FUNERAL SERVICES.

THE decision of the family was to have a service at Sycamore, at the residence of B. F. Sabin the son with whom he lived, and where he died; but to bury the body among the friends who had loved him in Georgia. There being no pastor at the Baptist church it was his request that a grandson should preach.* When he protested that he could not trust himself to attempt it, Father Sabin said, "You need not get up any thing new nor any thing about me but just preach a gospel sermon and comfort the friends."

The promise was made, and carried out. The pastors of the Methodist and Presbyterian churches were present, and assisted in the services. A quartette choir from the Presbyterian church sang most appropriately and sweetly several hymns of faith and trust in Jesus.

The sermon was reported, and by the request of many friends is here published to complete the record.

Sermon.

My friends, I have a sad and yet a glad task, a difficult and an easy task to day. Difficult because I must try to hold in check the emotions that come flooding my mind and heart. Easy because I learned when a small boy to have confidence in the judgment of this dear man. I learned that his requests were safe, and

* Rev. Alvah Sabin Hobart, Cincinnati, O.

purposes were kind. In obedience to the old habit, and with a desire to grant the last request of one who became a mother to me upon the death of my mother, and, in turn, my teacher, my pastor and my example of a godly minister I attempt to speak to-day. It was his request, and therefore I repress the emotions which would lead me to sit with these mourners, and mingle with my tears thanksgiving to God for such a grand-father, and for such a gospel of comfort as he taught me.

I will try to forget for a brief time that I am a son, and remember only that I a minister of the gospel which he, our dear, dear, old pastor, loved so well; and with which he comforted others. I desire to speak as if he were here to listen. The task is easier because so many of you came from our loved Vermont, and from Georgia as well. You heard him preach; you love the hills and mountains that he loved: you are familiar with the roads he traveled: the old house where he lived, and the tall poplar beside it: the place where he preached: the burying ground of his fathers and yours are all dear to you as well as to me. When a little fellow it was my habit to sit in the pulpit with him and look out upon the congregation, and the faces are all photographed upon my memory.

I ask myself how shall shall I comfort you? There is but one who has the right to the name of "Comforter;" that is the Holy Spirit. And he comforts by taking the things of Jesus and showing them to us. It is the truth applied by the spirit that comforts. There is no help for the sorrowing hearts in an attempt to explain the mysteries of affliction. I can not answer the question why so good a man should fall and suffer so much to die. I do not know enough of the causes nor

results of sorrow on human hearts to explain it at all and I will not try. There was a man once who was in great sorrow over the loss of family, and property, and health. His learned friends came in to comfort him by explaining to him the reasons of his misfortunes; but he said, "miserable comforters are ye all." Afterwards God appeared on the scene, but He did not explain any thing to Job. So far as we know Job died in ignorance of the reasons of his trouble. But Jehovah called his attention to the signs of God's goodness, wisdom, and power in the heavens above and in the earth beneath. He seems to have called Job's attention to all that he could see; and to have pointed out in all these the wondrous skill of the Creator. And Job was humbled. He cried out "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear but now mine eye seeth Thee; therefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes, and I confess that I have spoken things I understood not." It was a lesson of faith. He saw that God was good enough, and wise enough, so that he could well afford to lie down as it were, in his arms: or give him the hand and let him lead, assured that He doeth all things well. So now we will not try to explain anything but seek to get our comfort from what is revealed in the gospel.

In the fourth chapter of first Thessalonians, and the 13–18 verses are written these words, "*I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.*"

Here we are taught that it is not only the privilege of Christians to have a consolation at the death of friends which the world does not have; but it is their duty as well not to sorrow with that inconsolable grief natural

to those who have no hope. Then the Lord by his apostle goes on to show why we have reason to be consoled. "*For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord: that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not go before them which are asleep: for the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ*"—(Mark the limit of the promise, the dead in Christ)—"*shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*" Here then is the very truth which our Lord has given for the comfort of his people in such times as these. Let us see what it contains.

First there is the truth:

God's People Retain Their Identity.

"If we believe that Jesus rose again, even so." Mark this phrase, "Even so." Jesus is the pattern of what God will do for his own. In Romans, 8: 11 it is written "if the Spirit that raised up Jesus dwell in you, He that raised up Christ will also quicken your mortal bodies." Again it is written, (Romans 8: 29,) "whom He did foreknow them He did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son. That he might be the first born among many brethren." Here it is the declared purpose of God to people heaven with a multitude like His Son. In John's letter it is written, "it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but when it does

appear we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is." Again it is written in Philippians, 3: 21 "who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." Jesus himself is a book on the resurrection. Would you know anything of the power of God toward you, or his purposes, or willingness, look to see what he did with Jesus. He is the type of all.

Now of him three things are true. (*a*) He was the same Jesus. He is the "same yesterday, to-day and forever." When the wondering disciples saw him ascending to heaven and stood gazing after him, angels said to them, "This same Jesus shall so come as ye see him go into heaven." When Paul was dazzled by the vision on his way to Damascus, and said who art thou Lord? the answer was, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." When the beloved John, who had not seen his face nor heard his voice for sixty years, was permitted to open his eyes upon heavenly scenes in the beatific vision of Patmos, he saw one "like to the son of man." But, lest in the glory of the place John should be in doubt, it was said to him. "I am he that was dead, but am alive forevermore." And then at the last of the vision it was said, "I Jesus,"—notice, the very name his mother called him by,—"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify these things in the churches." By this we know that death does not blot out our consciousness of former existence. We shall be ourselves, and know that we are ourselves. And that life is but a continuation of this one. Grandfather has not ceased to be and will not.

(*b*) But there is another truth here. And I wonder that we should not see it sooner. We have heard

the question asked "shall we know our friends in heaven?" Did the friends of Jesus know him? If they did then we shall know ours; for his resurrection is the type of ours. The apostles were qualified to know him. For three years they had listened to his words with silent wonder: they had hung upon his lips: they had sat at his feet and watched the play of his features, seeing the heavenly smile, and the clouds of sorrow that sometimes overcast it; they had been in awe at the look of wrath, of righteous indignation which hypocrisy provoked. They were well qualified to know him. Would you know this dear Father Sabin after three days? Yes, after three years, or three times three years! And so did the apostles know Jesus. And so sure were they that spent their lives in testifying to the fact. All but two, if not all but one, died as martyrs because they persisted in declaring that they had seen Jesus. There could be no mistake. But mothers, would you know your oldest son if he were to die and return after three days? Well, so Mary knew her son. That boy of wondrous birth; whose life she had watched with solicitude: whom she had seen grow up to manhood; whose miracles had at first made her mother's heart swell with pride, and then hushed it with awe; whom at last she saw crucified, and had no power to help, or relieve. She was not deceived about him. It was her own son Jesus. But not more certainly did she know than we shall know. For his resurrection is the type of ours.

(*c*) But there is an exaltation of life. Jesus was the same and was recognized, but he was in a new condition. There was a strange quality to that body. You remember how he could hide his form so that they

did not recognize it. He came and went through closed doors. There was something not earthly about him. And so shall all be changed. This mortal must put on immortality and this corruptible put on incorruption. This old and weary body over which we have watched these past few weeks will have found its youthful vigor and be clad in never failing strength. There will be no more pain, no more loss of power, no failing memory, no dimmed eye-sight, but his body will be like unto the glorious body of our Lord, and surely it will not be sad to see him thus. I met a man upon the ocean who had been abroad for his health, and he told me that he left a wife and two children at home. While the days of our journey went slowly by, his eyes were looking constantly homeward. His heart was there and his body was held in check by the waters. When we came to New York he was on deck looking for his boy. At last he saw him on the wharf, but the boy did not see him. And in the joy of his heart he forgot himself and shouted "Henry! Henry! Here I am! Here I am!" and then turning to me he said, "See! See! My boy is there! My boy is there! But how he has grown!" Yes, he had grown. Changed greatly. Yet it was his boy all the same. And doubtless the wife and mother thought that the father had also changed. The once hollow eye was bright; the feeble frame was erect and strong; the voice no longer faint, but rich and full. Yet he was father and husband. There was no sorrow that he left his ills across the sea. So we may look to meet our loved ones and we shall find them changed, glorified, fitted to their heavenly state; but it will not be a sorrow to us that they have left the marks of their humanity in the grave, and that all frail-

ties, moral and physical, are gone; the stains of sin wiped from the brow, and the garments of earth exchanged for those in heaven. Let us then rejoice today in the identity, and the recognition and exaltation of our friends in the New Jerusalem.

There is another truth in the connection, namely:

The Meeting with all the Household of Faith.

This will not seem of much value to you. Your grief is so sharp that you think only of him who is just gone from us. But when the flood of tears has subsided a little. and a calmer meditative mood has come, then this truth will be a joy to you. Christian blessings are not little family affairs. Our joys are not selfish; not confined within even large families. Our fellowship is with every true believer. As we grow in grace we find our sympathies reaching out to more than formerly, and we are glad with all the people of God. It is with these as with our eyesight. We can see but a little ways about us here, but if we be lifted up our vision enlarges; we can see more and more as we rise, until with strengthened sight we can see the broad world. So with growing Christian experience, we take in more and more of God's people: and we enjoy the acquaintance of all believers. At the meeting of Christians in Cincinnati, under Mr. Moody, this winter, there were seven thousand people listening to the gospel at one time; and for several days hundreds of Christians met to rejoice together in the truths of salvation, and though we were strangers to each other yet there was a bond of fellowship. One woman said to me, "I feel as if I had found a thousand friends to-day."

We are told in the text that we shall meet all the believers in our Lord. And we are glad. For one I want to see old grandmother Bliss, the mother of this father of ours, I want to know her as a mother in Israel who trained her boys to be so true to God. Father Sabin will want to meet old Dr. Stoughton, whom he reverenced as a teacher, and Fuller, the theologian, by whose writings he profited. We all desire to meet the giants of Christian thought who wrought out the statements of doctrine for the world in the early centuries. We shall wish to sit and hear from the martyrs how the grace of God took the sting out of the fires of their martyrdom; and from the early missionaries, the story of the triumphs of the truth over the hardness of heathen hearts. It seems as if all eternity will be too short to hear the story of redemption's work. Then we must talk with Paul who wrote these words of our text, and the epistles of our New Testament; and with John, who gave us the words of Jesus in the 14th and 15th of his gospel, and told us of the city of God in his Revelation; and there are the Prophets, and old Abraham, towering up in the grandeur of their faith, like pyramids of Egypt above the surrounding level. And back of them are Noah, and Methusaleh, and Enoch, and Abel. All that vast multitude of the household of faith, the church of the first-born, the company which no man can number, all they will be there, and we shall meet them. And, as our minds contemplate it in quiet, it will be seen to be a promise that is given to satisfy one of the deepest desires of the soul. And we shall meet them in the air, be caught up together with them to the company of the Savior.

There is a question here which it is not well to pass by.

Will These Earthly Relations Continue? Or, In Other Words, Will He Be Our Father And Grandfather Still?

We would be cautious in the answer, but we may say with confidence that nothing will be taken from us which adds to our comfort. If the joys of Heaven are more joyful by the dearer attachment to our own kin than to others, then we shall have that attachment. But it is possible to so outshine this love of kin in the flesh by the Christian kinship, that it is almost forgotten. He who is gone was almost more to us as a Christian than as a relative. Indeed it was the Christian spirit shining through the relative which made him a prince, yea, a king of relatives. The moon has a glory of its own, and it is not taken away at sunrise; yet the glory of the sun is so much greater that we do not see the moon in the day time. Paul said of the Old Testament that it was glorious, but it came to have no glory because of the glory of that which excelleth. Undoubtedly the love of Mary for her son was great. I do not wonder that the church of Rome exalts Mary. The angel said at the annunciation, "Blessed art thou among women." That she give birth to the Christ, the Savior of the world, the King of Heaven, this was transcendent honor. And she knew it, and none could have more love than she for that boy. Yet, when she came to know that she like all others was saved by the cross, and that the pain she saw him suffer, that shame which she saw him bear on the tree, which nearly broke her heart to see, was endured in part for her sins that she might have a new and living way to the throne of grace, and accepted him as her Savior, it seems as if she would be occupied with thoughts of him as Savior more

than as son. Of this Jesus gave a kind intimation when he said to those who reported to him that his mother was without, and wished to see him. Looking around on his disciples, he said, "behold my mother and my brethren." This seems to teach,—not that he had left his love for his mother,—but that he had taken all his disciples in the same close circle of his affections as his mother. At another time he said, "In heaven they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels." James and John were sons of Zedebee, and therefore brothers; yet they were both apostles. And it would not seem strange if, as they came to realize the great honor and responsibility they had from our Lord in being the authoritative teachers of his gospel, the foundation builders of the church of the new covenant, that this fellowship of work, and the fellowship in Christ out-ranked all other relations, and John the fellow apostle was dearer to James than John the brother. But this we can leave to him who loved us and gave his life for us. Among the writings I have seen of late is this sentence, "God never does anything which a man would not do if he knew as much as God." The results will justify the ways of God.

But let us consider another truth of the text.

We shall be with the Lord forever.

Brethren, we know what it is to get a glimpse of Christ by faith. We have sometimes been with a few of his people when we all had such a sense of his goodness and glory that we felt like lengthening out the hours. Did not our heart burn within us while we

talked of him and his grace? Yet that was only an hour of faith in him. Looking over Father Sabin's writing I found an account of a time when he had a clear view of Christ's mercy, and he said it seemed as if he could "walk on eggs and not break them." But alas! these times are to short and too seldom. Yet they are, we are told, the earnest of our inheritance. Now when a man buys a piece of property of a stranger he pays five dollars to bind the bargain. This is to show that he is in earnest. That money is called the "earnest money." It is just like the balance of what is to come. So the holy spirit which gives us these joyful seasons is said to be the "earnest of our inheritance." We have enough to make us long for more full knowledge of Jesus. But we shall be with him forever. Those lips which we have longed to hear speak will speak to us; that face which we have longed to see will smile upon us, the tabernacle of God will be with men, and he will dwell with them, and they will be his people.

We have heard some say that when they reached the other side they should go at once to Jesus. To those of a few years in Christian life this seems strange. But as we grow older in his service it gets to be our own desire and expectation. Paul said, "I long to depart and to be with Christ." And we may well believe that our father and friend has ere this seen Jesus, and is now, while we are studying with tearful eyes the truth about our Savior, sitting at his feet listening to the lips that had so often interceded with the Father for him. This hope it is that fills the soul with longing. It will be the joy of heaven to thus be with Jesus. The figure chosen to tell us of heavens joy is a marriage feast, and there the bridegroom is the center of attraction, and he is

Christ. He it is who with the Father makes the light of heaven. What more could be said to us for comfort than these things? They are a fountain of consolation for all who believe in Jesus. They are my comfort to-day. They take the sting from the sorrow. I am thankful for them. I praise his name for them. I am thankful that I have been able to command my feelings to speak them to you. O, that every one here would be comforted by them.

At Georgia, another service was held. A great number went tenderly to receive the body which though it was but a body they still loved. The old meeting house at the "Plain" where for so many years he preached, was hung in mourning. A picture of Father Sabin looked down upon the sad congregation. Peacefully his face slept under their gaze in the place where he had seen so many of his towns people. Again it was verified, "There is one event to us all, and there is no discharge in this war."

The pastor Rev. J. G. Lorimer spoke from the words, "A great man is fallen in Israel," and reviewed the qualities of his greatness. Pastors from the other churches in town were present and spoke words of appreciation. Rev. Mr. Pratt, of St. Albans Baptist church, and Rev. J. H. Woodward, pastor of the Congregational church at Milton, an old man who had been intimately acquainted with him for many years, uttered words of eulogy, and thankfulness for his influence.

The sad company, each one desirous to help with tender hand then took up the casket, bore it reverently to

the "grave yard" and laid it among their own loved dead, by the side of his mother and daughter Pathenia. Glad that to them was given the favor of doing the last human service to a man that for eighty-three years was a self sacrificing servant of theirs for Jesus sake.

He can not come to us, but we may go to him.

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