

THE
Congregational Quarterly.

VOL. I.—JULY, 1859.—No. III.

COTTON MATHER.

BY REV. ALONZO H. QUINT, JAMAICA PLAIN.

"ON Monday last," says the *New England Weekly Journal*, dated Feb. 26, 1728, "the Remains of the late very Reverend and Learned Dr. COTTON MATHER, who deceased the thirteenth instant, to the great Loss and Sorrow of this Town and Country, were very honorably interred. His Reverend Colleague, in deep Mourning, with the Brethren of the Church, walking in a Body, before the Corpse. The Six first Ministers of the Boston Lecture¹ supported the Pall. Several Gentlemen of the bereaved flock took their turns to bear the Coffin. After which followed, first, the bereaved Relatives, in Mourning; then his Honour the Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable His Majesty's Council, and House of Representatives; and then a large train of Ministers, Justices, Merchants, Scholars, and other principal Inhabitants, both of Men and Women. The Streets were crowded with People, and the windows filled with sorrowful Spectators, all the way to the Burying place." The same newspaper, in its issue a week earlier, mentions him as one

"by whose Death, Persons of all Ranks are in Concern and Sorrow. He was," it continues, "perhaps, the principal Ornament of this Country, and the greatest Scholar that ever was bred in it. But besides his unusual learning: his exalted Piety and extensive Charity, his entertaining Wit, and singular Goodness of temper, recommended him to all that were Judges of real and distinguished Merit:" and the forty-seven years of his professional life, it declares to have "been spent in the faithful and unwearied Discharge of a lively, zealous, and awakening Ministry, and in incessant Endeavours to do Good and spread abroad the Glory of Christ."

Nor were the pulpits of Boston silent upon this occasion. Various commemorative sermons followed his decease, four of which are still in print.² The Reverend Samuel Mather paid the tribute of filial affection to his father's memory, in his father's pulpit. The Reverend Benjamin Colman preached, the Thursday before the burial, as the Lecture, on Enoch's Translation. The Reverend

¹ The "Ministers of the Boston Lecture" were those who, each in turn, preached the Thursday Lecture in the First Church, a custom still continued.

² They are to be found in the Library of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

the view of Consociation by an examination of my sermons, though some of the Consociation (flaming New Lights,) would have rejoiced in my overthrow." After this, he says, he examined, "and came into a new set of notions." These he withheld from the people, "until interrogated in open church meeting." He adds, "What you say further of the Consociation's unanimity, is also far from being true. The major part voted against what you call Arminianism, but some did not, nor could they with a good conscience, and I believe few of them would act the same part again, and ruin a people, as they have done poor Ashford. But Orthodoxy atones for all faults, and Heresy extinguishes all virtues with some people."

In the spring of 1742, Mr. Bass removed to Providence, R.I. where he was employed to supply the pulpit of the First Congregational Church, which was then but a remnant in consequence of the recent separation of Mr. Snow's adherents. Rev. Dr. Hall, in an Historical Discourse, says, "The encouragement given to Mr. Bass was very small, the number of hearers being often not over twenty, and the Church so scattered and divided that it was scarcely known whether any of them were left. At length, in 1758, his health being poor, Mr. Bass relinquished preaching, and entered on the practice of physic, in which he continued till his death, which occurred Oct. 24, 1762." This event was thus noticed in the Providence Gazette of 30th October: "Last Lord's Day morning departed this life, in the 46th year of his age, the late Rev. John Bass, of this town. A gentleman who, in his public performances, was evangelical, learned, rational and accurate; and in private life was sociable, beneficent, compassionate, instructive, and exemplary. In his last sickness, which was of long continuance, he submitted to the dealings of Divine Providence with the patience and resignation of a Christian, united to the calmness and fortitude of a Hero. His funeral obsequies were attended on Tuesday last by a nu-

merous concourse of people." Mr. Bass's remains have been removed from their original resting place to the Swan Point Cemetery, where they lie with those of other ministers of the First (Unitarian) Congregational Church.

Mr. Bass published, (1751,) "A True Narrative of the late unhappy contention in the church at Ashford." There was a reply to this in 1752 by Rev. Samuel Niles of Braintree, Ms., which he (being then 78 years old) "delivered as his dying testimony." In 1753 Mr. Bass published "A Letter to Mr. Niles, with remarks on his dying testimony."

Mr. Bass married Nov. 24, 1742, Mary, daughter of Samuel Danielson of Killingly, and had children—John, Mary, John, Sarah, James, and Samuel, of whom the two latter settled in Providence.

Rev. TIMOTHY ALLEN was born in Norwich, Sept. 1, 1715, son of Timothy and Rachel (Bushnell) Allyn, graduated at Y. C. 1736, and A. M.

He was first ordained pastor at West Haven in 1738, but for some little imprudences of speech was dismissed by the Consociation in 1742. This was in the time of the Great Awakening, and Mr. Allen seems to have become one of the leading "New Lights," as the more stirring preachers were called. He was for a while the teacher of a kind of theological school in New London, called "the Shepard's Tent." He probably officiated temporarily in many pulpits in different States.

At last he settled again in Ashford, being installed Oct. 12, 1757, and remained in this charge nearly seven years, being dismissed Jan. 13, 1764. After another considerable interval we find him again at Chesterfield, Ms., where he was installed, June 15, 1785, in the seventieth year of his age. The Church having expressed their desire that Mr. Allen should preach the sermon at his own installation, he did so. His stipulated support ceased May 1, 1794, though he was employed to preach a number of Sabbaths afterwards, and was not formally dismissed till 1796. He

died in Chesterfield, Jan. 12, 1806, in his 91st year.

Mr. Allen, when living in Chesterfield, was a venerable old man of large stature and somewhat fleshy. His manners were eccentric, and he was rather careless in his dress. He had the reputation of learning. Dr. Trumbull calls him a man of genius and talents, of strict morals, and a powerful and fervent preacher. The Con-sociation boasted at his dismissal that they had put out one "new light," and would blow them all out. But his light continued to shine for many years afterwards.

Mr. Allen published these pamphlets: "Common Sense, in some free remarks on the efficiency of a moral change." "The Main Point, a discourse on The Just shall live by faith." "A Sermon at the Dedication of a Meeting house in Chesterfield." "An Answer to Pilate's Question, What is truth." "Salvation of all men, put out of all dispute." "An Essay on Outward Christian Baptism."

Mr. Allen married (1) Mary Bishop, who died about 1757, and (2) Mrs. Dorothy (Gallup) Reed, who died in 1804. His children, all by his first marriage, were a son, who died at 21 years of age, and five daughters, who all married and had considerable families, viz. Mary, Evangel-y, Fanny, Harmony, and Theodamy.

Rev. JAMES MESSINGER was born Dec. 14, 1737,—probably the son of Rev. Henry and Esther (Cheevers) Messinger, of Wrentham, Ms. He graduated H. C. 1762,—was called to Ashford Nov. 1768, and ordained Feb. 15, 1769.

He died Jan. 6, 1782, leaving a widow without children. Her original name was Elizabeth Fisher. After the death of Mr. Messinger, she married Benjamin Hayward of Woodstock, and died in 1814.

Rev. ENOCH POND was the eldest son of Dea. Jacob Pond, of Wrentham, Ms., where he was born April 27, 1756. He graduated B. U. 1777, and A. M. He entered the American army for one year, and served as Ensign in Col. Lee's regiment.

On the expiration of his term of enlistment, he was employed some years as a school-teacher with great acceptance. He then studied theology with Dr. Emmons, and was settled at Ashford, Sept. 16, 1789. In this post he continued till his death by consumption, Aug. 6, 1807. Mr. Pond's ministry was marked by several powerful revivals, one of which, in 1798, added 80 members to his Church. He is reported a man of amiable character, pleasing manners, fluent speech and real worth. His epitaph, by a neighboring minister, runs thus:

Generous in Temper,
Correct in Science and Liberal in Sentiment;
The Gentleman, the Scholar, and the
Minister of the Sanctuary,
Appeared with Advantage in
MR. POND.
The Church and Society in Ashford were fa-
vored with his Gospel Ministry
Eighteen Years.

In yonder sacred house he spent his breath,
Now silent, senseless, here he lies in death;
These lips again shall wake, and then declare
A loud Amen to truths they published there.

Mr. Pond married (1) Miss Margaret Smith, daughter of Col. John Smith, of Wrentham, by whom he had children; Hannah, Lucas, Marcus, Lucas, Betsey, Benj. Clark, Jacob, Enoch, Sally, Abigail, John; (2) Mrs. Mary Baker, of Roxbury.¹

Rev. PHILO JUDSON was born in Woodbury, in 1792, a son of Philo and Emma (Minor) Judson. He graduated Y. C. 1809, and was ordained at Ashford, Sept. 26, 1811, in which charge he remained till dismissed, March 27, 1833. He was afterwards installed at Willimantic, Dec. 1834, and dismissed March 21, 1839; subsequently preached at Hanover and North Stonington and Rocky Hill, in which last place he was prostrated, during a revival, by bleeding at the lungs. Mr. Judson still resides at Rocky Hill, and has employed himself in selling school-books. His pastoral labors resulted in large accessions to the churches. He

¹ Blake's History of Mendon Association.