

HISTORY
OF
BEDFORD CHURCH

Discourse

DELIVERED AT THE CELEBRATION OF THE TWO HUNDREDTH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BEDFORD
WESTCHESTER CO., NEW YORK
MARCH 22D, 1881

BY
CHARLES W. BAIRD, D.D.

*WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE PROCEEDINGS
ON THAT OCCASION*

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THE Presbyterian Church of Bedford is the oldest of the churches under the care of the Presbytery of Westchester (Synod of New York). In anticipation of the two hundredth anniversary of its foundation, the Session of the church invited the Rev. Charles W. Baird, D.D., historian of the Presbytery, to deliver a historical discourse upon that occasion. The Presbytery approved the appointment, and resolved to meet in Bedford at the time of the celebration. The discourse, considerably enlarged, together with an account of the other proceedings, is now published—by order of the church Session—at the request of the congregation and of many others who participated in the bi-centenary celebration.

JAMES H. HOYT, *Pastor.*

JOHN G. CLARK,
ST. JOHN OWEN,
DANIEL B. FINCH,
DAVID TRAVIS,
JAMES H. TROWBRIDGE,
ALBERT WILLIAMSON, } *Elders.*

BEDFORD, WESTCHESTER COUNTY, N. Y.,
December 1st, 1881.

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DISCOURSE.

THERE is a singular fascination about those employments of the mind in which we seek to recall and to reconstruct the past ; whether by the play of the imagination, the effort of memory, or the wider sweep and severer exercise of thought in gathering and comparing testimony concerning past events. The charm is one that many feel most powerfully, and yield to most readily, when imagination leads the way, and the wand of the poet or the novelist evokes the semblance of things that have been. It is a charm acknowledged by others, to whom verse and story have little attraction, yet whose sober thoughts recur, with an interest that grows stronger as the years go by, to the days of their youth, and to the olden times of which they have heard with their ears, of which their fathers have told them. But unquestionably the chief satisfaction of the mind in dealing with the past is found in those labours, and in the fruits of those labours, by which the facts of the past are ascertained, and its lessons are brought to view. Difficult, often baffling, often disappoint-

ing, this study is one of which we never weary, and which never utterly fails to reward us. To tempt us on, as by means of the slender records that remain, and the faint traditions that have come down, we seek to live over the past and to reproduce it for others—to tempt us, and to help us on, there are the immutable things of nature; the scenery of the drama of human life that has been acted beneath these arching skies; the hills, the streams, the fields, the paths that were traced through the wilderness in the early settlement, and that have been trodden these two hundred years; the sites, if not the very dwellings, where the fathers lived. “One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh, but the earth abideth forever.” Man himself, through these succeeding generations, has remained greatly the same. The joys and the troubles, the loves and the animosities, the toils and the sufferings, that break up this little life of ours, have been known from age to age. And in so far as the times and the men have changed, the change has been significant of progress. Humanity has been keeping step with the march of the centuries. If life, in some of its aspects, is an unvarying round of occurrences—“that which was is that which shall be, and there is nothing new under the sun”—in another and a nobler aspect, life is an onward movement, an unfolding of a plan of God. This thought, above all other thoughts, is engaging and helpful to the student of history. It is, I am sure, the impres-

sion under which we meet here to-day to celebrate the completion of two centuries in the history of this town and of this church. Here, in the quiet country, as in the great world beyond, the steady working out of a divine plan has taken place, the vigil of an unslumbering Providence has been kept, the kingdom of God has been advancing.

Let us go back then, two hundred years, to the twenty-second day of March, in the year of our Lord sixteen hundred and eighty-one. It is a strange and an eventful time. Charles the Second is on the throne of England. A reign marked by disasters and disgraces, and stained by every kind of vice and meanness, is approaching its end. Yesterday the king summoned his last parliament, which he will dissolve within a week, to reign after that without a parliament until his death, four years hence. Meanwhile, in the struggle that is going on for civil and religious freedom, it is the cause of despotism that seems to be everywhere in the ascendant. The Nonconformists of England, and the Presbyterians of the North, are suffering restraint or persecution. Richard Baxter is preaching by stealth in the neighbourhood of London; and in that Bedford from which our town is to take its name, and in whose jail, ten years ago, he wrote "The Pilgrim's Progress," John Bunyan is allowed to pursue his lowly ministry. But in the moors and mountain fastnesses of Scotland, the Covenanters are hiding from the troops of Claverhouse, or expiating the crime of fidelity to Christ,

1681.
21 March.

by the penalty of torture and of death. Thousands of Scottish Presbyterians are this moment planning to fly their country and emigrate to America. In France, Louis the Fourteenth, now at the summit of his power, "the arbiter of Europe," is listening to secret proposals from the English King, and promising help in the effort to crush out the liberties of his subjects; while at the same time giving orders, this very month, to try the experiment of the "dragonnades" on the inoffensive Huguenots in his own realm. It is a dark and dreary day in the history of the nations.

On this side of the ocean, English colonists are breathing a purer and a freer air: but they are still few, and weak, and poor. Sixty years have elapsed since the landing of the Mayflower; fifty years since the arrival of Winthrop's company at Salem, and the planting of the colony of Massachusetts Bay. Two generations of hardy, resolute men have lived through the stern New England winters, and urged their progress into the wilderness. At present, Plymouth and Massachusetts are slowly recovering from the impoverishment produced by Philip's war. Connecticut alone, of all the New England colonies, is quiet and in a measure prosperous. "A community of farmers," with little trade, and small increase from immigration, there is general comfort, and scarcely any poverty within its borders. There are but few servants and fewer slaves. The population is homogeneous. "So few English, Scotch, or Irish come in, that we can give

1620.
11 November.

1630.
12 June.

no account of them." * The country is peopling with a sturdy and frugal race, who, left greatly to govern themselves, are working out in their town organizations, and in their political assemblies, a system that anticipates and prepares the way for the free institutions of a coming age. They are a people who prize learning. Every town is required by law to support a school, and nearly all the children in the colony attend the schools. They are a religious people. Of the outward forms of religion, none could be more rigidly observant. The Sabbath is kept, public worship is frequented, the Christian ministry † is honoured, the Bible is read, immorality and false doctrine are denounced universally. And while doubtless there are some for whom religion consists only in these outward forms, there are many more, we have good reason to believe, who are leading quiet and peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty, in the land where they have sought freedom to worship God.

1681.

We are in Connecticut. The boundary line between this colony and the province of New York, has not yet been ascertained, and will not be for these two years. Just now, it is supposed to run

* Report of the Governor to the Lords of Trade, 15 July, 1680. Public Records of Connecticut, Vol. III., p. 298.

† "They have . . . a scholar to their minister in every town or village." Transactions of the Commissioners in New England, 1665. Paper relating to the colony of Connecticut. Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, 1661-1668, preserved in Her Majesty's Public Record Office, page 341.

1640.
1 July.

somewhere to the west of this spot, nearer the Hudson river. We are in Stamford. The territory of the town of Stamford, as purchased from the Indians, stretches northward from the sea-coast about sixteen miles, and includes the south-eastern quarter of the future town of Bedford. As yet, however, no inland settlement has been effected. Like Asher of old, the people "continue on the sea-shore, and abide in their creeks." From the Housatonic to the Hudson, the whole interior is a wilderness. East of the Housatonic even, and as far as the Connecticut valley, there are but two inland plantations.* With the exception of these two, the twenty-six towns of the colony lie scattered along the Connecticut river and the Sound.

It was not long after the arrival of Winthrop's company at Salem, in 1630, that some of the Massachusetts colonists, in search of a more fertile region, found their way to the Connecticut river, and established themselves at Hartford, Windsor, and Wethersfield. The settlement of Wethersfield was made by certain immigrants who had first sat down at Watertown, near Boston. They soon fell into disputes and contentions among themselves. At the end of five years the contending parties agreed to separate. A number of families, with their minister, the Reverend Richard Denton, left Wethersfield, and came down to the southern shore of Connecticut, where several plantations

* Woodbury and Waterbury.

had lately been commenced at Milford, Stratford, Fairfield, and Greenwich. Here they founded the town of Stamford.*

1641.
May.

This was forty years ago. And now a band of Stamford men, twenty-four in number,† have made

* Called at first Rippowam, or the Wethersfield Men's Plantation. —History of Stamford, Conn., by the Rev. E. B. Huntington, p. 17. —History of the Town of Greenwich, Conn., by D. M. Mead, p. 27.

† Namely:—Richard Ambler, Abraham Ambler, Joseph Theale, Daniel Weed, Eleazar Slawson, John Wescot, Jonathan Pettit, John Cross, John Miller, Nicholas Webster, Richard Ayres, Jonas Seely, Joseph Stevens, Daniel Jones, Thomas Pennoyer, John Holmes, Benjamin Stevens, John Green, senior, David Waterbury, Samuel Weed, Jonathan Kilborn, John Bates, Nathaniel Cross, William Clark. Richard Ambler lived until 1699. Abraham, his only surviving son, was born 22 Sept., 1642; married Mary Bates, 25 Dec., 1662. Joseph Theale, son of Nicholas, of Watertown, was born 24 Oct., 1640. Daniel and Samuel Weed were sons of Jonas, of Watertown. Eleazar Slawson was the son of George, of Lynn, in 1637. John Wescot, son of Richard, of Wethersfield. John (son-in-law of Robert Bates), and Nathaniel Cross, brothers, were of Windsor. John Miller, son of John, of Wethersfield. Nicholas Webster, of Stamford, had married Sarah, dau. of John Waterbury. Richard Ayres was of Stamford. Jonas Seely, son of Obadiah, and grandson of Robert, of Watertown in 1630. Joseph and Benjamin Stevens, sons of Thomas, of Stamford. Daniel Jones, son of Cornelius, of Stamford. Thomas Pennoyer, born in 1658, son of Robert, of Stamford. John Holmes, born in Beverly, Yorkshire, Eng., died in 1729, aged ninety. John Green was of Stamford, in 1657. David Waterbury, son or grandson of John, of Waterbury. Jonathan Kilborn, probably of Wethersfield. John Bates, son of Robert, of Wethersfield. William Clark, probably a son of Samuel, of Wethersfield, one of the earliest settlers of Stamford. (Huntington, History of Stamford. Savage, Geneal. Dictionary, *passim*. List of the names of the persons within the district of the town of Bedford, 5 Sept., 1698. MSS. in office of Secretary of State, Albany, N. Y.)

1681.
March.

their way to this spot in the remote northern limits of their town. They have followed, we may suppose, the Indian path leading up from the shore to this inland clearing, and so have reached "the bend of the Mahanas River," where they propose to build their homes. The Town Spot, for which they have obtained a grant from Stamford, is a tract of land nine square miles in extent. It will be known in future as The First Purchase, or Bedford Three Miles Square.* At present, it is known as The Hop Ground.

Large portions of this tract have been under cultivation by the Indians. It was here †—so the tradition runs—that the savages whom Underhill surprised in the year 1644, ‡ raised their crops of corn. Yonder, on the south side of the hill known as Indian Farm, stood their village, with its three rows of huts, sheltered from the northwest wind. The level lands along the bend of the Mahanas, stretching northward toward Aspetong, invite the

* "After the Town had got a grant for 6 miles, they proposed to purchase from the Indians a Town Spot of 3 miles Square. The Old Purchase was generally called the three Mile Square. They had a place called the 3 miles round about, which lay near the head of Mehanas. The main of the Settlements were where the river runs east. Cortlandts line came to the southward of the northwest corner of the old purchase of Bedford." (Testimony in suit for-ejectment, Anderson *vs.* Rushton, 16 April, 1733.—Jay Papers, MSS.)

† History of the County of Westchester, N. Y., by Robert Bolton, vol. I., p. 7. (Revised edition.)

‡ History of New Netherland, by E. B. O'Callaghan, M.D. Vol. I., pp. 300, 301.

settlers' choice, and promise abundant room for their meadows and plantations. Here then they will lay out their "house lots" and "field lots," reserving a central space for the village green or common. And here, fronting on the common, at the foot of the rock or crag to be known henceforth as Bates' hill, the Puritan Meeting-house shall be erected.

Not content with a grant of this tract from the town of Stamford, within whose bounds it lies, our settlers, in accordance with the honest usage of Connecticut, have purchased the land from its Indian claimants. The bargain with the "heathen" was sealed at Stamford, last December; the price paid being thirty-eight pounds and fifteen shillings.* Before the closing of the contract, John Cross, one of the purchasers, went up with the Indians to inspect the land.† His name will be associated hereafter with the stream at the north-eastern angle of the Hop Ground, called by the Indians Peppeneghek, and by the white men Cross River.‡

1680.
23 December.

Our settlers, nearly all, are the sons of English Puritans, founders of the colony of Massachusetts Bay. We recognize the names of Wescot, Miller,

* The Record Book of ye Proprietors of Bedford : anno 1683.

† "John Cross was sent with the Indians." (Testimony in suit for ejectment.)

‡ The same name was also given to a tract of land in the northern part of the town, known as Cross's Vineyard, now included in the Jay estate.

1681.

Kilborn, Clark, and Bates, as names of "Wethersfield men." John and Nathaniel Cross are the sons of a Windsor settler. Other names, as Theale, Weed, and Seely, are to be traced back to the earlier settlement at Watertown. In only one case can we refer to the place where the settler's family originated in England. John Holmes is a native of Beverly, Yorkshire, and came to this country some twenty years ago, when just of age.*

The little company has its leader and patriarch in Richard Ambler, now seventy years old, a representative of the first generation of New England men. He was of Watertown as early as the year 1637. His only son, Abraham Ambler, accompanies the expedition, of which, indeed, he is one of the most influential members. The men thus associated are not only from the same town, and the same religious society, but there are ties also of kinship and intermarriage uniting them. Daniel and Samuel Weed are brothers. So are John and Nathaniel Cross, and Joseph and Benjamin Stevens. John Miller and Jonas Seely are half-brothers; while Abraham Ambler and John Bates, John Cross and John Bates, Nicholas Webster and David Waterbury are brothers-in-law. It will cer-

* The family represented among the first settlers of Bedford by John Holmes, senior, and John Holmes, junior, appears to have been entirely distinct from the family of the same name among the early settlers of Stamford. John Holmes, senior, is said to have come from England to New York. He first settled in Greenwich, and thence removed to Bedford. (Mead's Hist. of Greenwich, Conn., p. 313.)

tainly be strange, if, sustaining these relations, our settlers shall fail to make it appear how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

Before the end of the first year, the proprietors had admitted three additional members* to their body, making the entire number twenty-seven; and they had also agreed "to receive eleven *inhabitants* into the Hop Ground in order to the settlement of a town." † Under the laws of Connecticut it was necessary that a plantation should consist of a sufficient body of freeholders, in order to be dignified by the name and be admitted to the rights of a town. It was not until this had been accomplished, that Bedford obtained its present designation. The General Court at Hartford now granted the petition of "the people of the Hop Ground," giving them the "privilege of a plantation," and ordering "that the name be henceforth called Bedford." ‡

1682.
16 May.

* Cornelius Seely, brother of Jonas; John Miller, junior (perhaps "the good and pious Deacon Miller" mentioned further on); and John Slawson, brother of Eleazar.

† The persons so received were Thos. Wyat, Samuel Burrett, Zachariah Roberts, Joshua Webb, Wm. Sturdevant, Stephen Clason, Thos. Canfield, Theoph. Balden, Thos. Wilman, Joseph Green, Daniel Simkins.

‡ *May 16, 1682.*—Vpon the petition of the people of Hop Ground, This Court doth grant them the priviledg of a plantation, and doe order that the name of the towne be hencefort called Bedford. And this Court doe appoynt Joseph Theale to be the present cheife military officer for the Train Band of sayd Bedford; and Abram Ambler is impowered by this Court to grant warrants, to

Why the former name should have been adopted, and why the latter should now be conferred, we do not know. The one, "The Hop Ground," may have been suggested by the profusion of the plant referred to, growing wild, as we learn, in this region at the time of the settlement.* The other, Bedford, was given, most probably, by the General Court, in accordance with a principle adopted many years before, "intending," as they quaintly expressed it, "thereby to keep and leave to posterity the memorial of several places of note in our dear native country of England." † There is no ground for supposing that the first settlers of this town came from Bedford in England.

Together with its new name, the plantation received the usual outfit of an orderly New England community. Joseph Theale was appointed chief officer of the train band. Abraham Ambler was empowered to grant warrants, administer the oath, and join persons in marriage. The same important person was chosen by his fellow-settlers as town clerk and recorder of lands. But there were two offices in the gift of the people, for the filling of which they had not waited to be formally con-

swear officers and witnesses, and to joyne persons in marriage according to law: and they doe free the sayd towne of Bedford from the country rates for the space of three yeares next ensueing. (Colonial Records of Connecticut.)

* "Hop-meadow" was the name given by the early settlers of Simsbury, Conn., to a part of their plantation. (History of Simsbury, Granby, and Canton, by Noah A. Phelps.)

† Colonial Records of Connecticut.

stituted a town. At one and the same meeting, the proprietors received Joshua Webb as an inhabitant to be their miller, and called a Minister.

1681.
2 December.

The settlement of a Minister was always the foremost care of a New England plantation. Doubtless the founders of this town were disposed so to recognize it. But they had already been reminded of their duty by the General Court of the colony. The very first order of the Court, relating to this settlement, required that provision be made for the "first Minister of the place," and for his successors in office "forever." *

1681.
19 May.

I have dwelt thus at length upon the period and the circumstances of the early settlement, because it has appeared to me that these facts might justly affect our understanding of the character and the history of this town. It is surely not without significance that this latest plantation of Connecticut, projected like a vein of finer metal into the meta-

* *May 19, 1681.*—This Court being moved to grant liberty to erect a plantation upon the Hopp Ground and adjacent lands, about 12 miles to the northwards of Standford, doe grant their request, and appoynt Captⁿ Richard Olmsted, L^{nt} Jonath. Bell and L^{nt} Jonath. Lockwood and Mr. Joseph Theale, to be a committee to entertein such persons as shall plant there, and to manage, order and disspose of the affayres of that plantation, according to their best skill and so as may best advance the welfare and growth of the sayd plantation ; and that they are to take care that there be a suitable lott layd out for the first minister of the place, and a lott for the ministry, to be and belong to the ministry for ever.—Conn. Records.

A certified copy of the above order, taken 21 Jan., 1696, is in the possession of Mrs. John C. Holmes, Lewisboro'.

1681.

morphic mass of our New York population, while yet the Puritan fervour lasted, and just at the time when this province was taking its permanent shape, bore so close and so demonstrable a relation to the great civil and religious movement that formed New England. I do not insist that this vein was one of pure gold. Inferior elements mingled, we know, from the first, with the better materials of the New England colonization.* Doubtless there were such elements here. But we have ample evidence that the founders of this town were for the most part upright and God-fearing men. Some of them, as John Holmes, Abraham Ambler, John Wescot, Zachariah Roberts, Cornelius Seely, and Daniel Jones, were active Christian men—"gifted brethren," to use the phrase of that day†—to whom, in the absence of a Minister, the community looked as competent to guide and edify them in their religious life. Such a man, too, was "the pious and good Deacon Miller"—so styled in a legal document relating to those early times, as one whose testimony should be held sufficient to establish a controverted fact. ‡

* Many of the young men were "wild enough," says Bradford: *History of Plymouth Plantation*, p. 106.

† "They . . . are so poor that they are not able to maintain scholars for their ministers, but are necessitated to make use of a gifted brother in some places." (*Transactions of the Commissioners in New England, 1665. Paper relating to the colony of New Plymouth. Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, 1661-1668, page 344.*)

‡ Testimony in suit for ejection.

These are matters of record. I have no doubt that there are traditions which confirm the record; that among the descendants of these men there linger memories of their simple manners and their antique virtues, their love of truth and honesty, their reverence for the Sabbath, and their strong faith in the teachings of God's word. And if something of all this remains with their children, it is meet and right that we should give credit for it to the fathers. It is right that we should recall the early times in which principles were tested, and character was formed; remembering "in what a forge and what a heat" the institutions we now possess were long ago cast and fashioned.

The action we commemorate to-day, as taken two hundred years ago, relates to the location of the "Meeting-house" or church of the first settlers. Twelve days before, the proprietors of the Hop Ground, still residing in Stamford, had appointed five of their number* "to lay out the Town Plot both for situation and also to lay out the house lots, and one lotment in the field on the east side of the plaine to every proprietor." A "convenient lot" was also to be left in the Town Plot, and a lot in the field, "proportionable with the others," for the use of the town. The committee thus appointed made report that they had fulfilled their task, laying out the street, and designating the

1681.
10 March.

1681.
17 March.

* Joseph Theale, Abraham Ambler, John Miller, Daniel Jones, John Cross.

1681.

house lots of three acres each, the choice of which was made as usual by casting the lot. On the twenty-second of March, 1681, the proprietors met, and approved the report of the "layers out." * It was resolved "the town common" be reserved in the place that had been determined upon, "and the Meeting-house shall be set upon the common so layd out namely the rock called Bates his Hill."

The Town Common of the first settlers, was unquestionably the spot now known as the Village Green. Originally, it would seem, covering three acres, † it has been gradually diminished by successive encroachments: but as recently embellished and enclosed, it forms the central attraction of this beautiful village. On the west side of the little park rises the singular eminence formerly known as Bates' Hill. Here, at the foot of the steep cliff, lies the ancient graveyard, where Thomas Denham, the first Minister of Bedford, and many of his parishioners, the "forefathers of the hamlet," sleep. And here, adjoining the burying-ground,

* "22d March 16⁸⁰/₁ the propriators agree that wt [what] the committee had done in laying out ye town plot and the house lots shall stand, and the place they reserued for the town comon and the town lot to be as they laid it out and the meeting house shall be set upon the common so layd out namly the rock called Bates his Hill."

† The "lot for the use of the town" in the town plot was probably of the same size with the other house lots, which were to be not less than three acres in extent. The lot reserved in the field for the same use was to be "proportionable with the other lots" in that locality.

and fronting on the Common, stood the first house of worship erected in this place, upon the present site of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Bedford village. It has been supposed hitherto that this first house of worship was identical with the building destroyed a hundred years later, in the course of the Revolutionary war ; and that it stood at the foot of the hill, near the head of the village street, a few rods east of the site of the church recently abandoned for the present one. I am indebted to Mr. James Wood, President of the Westchester County Historical Society, for the suggestion of the site mentioned above : and upon further examination I have been enabled to identify "the rock called Bates his Hill" with the eminence north of the Methodist Church. The town records show that in 1787 the trustees of the Presbyterian Church sold to Enoch Hall a certain piece of vacant land on the south side of Bates' Hill, "reserving a drift way next to the Grave Yard and so next to the Hill for the Inhabitation to draw stones." Enoch Hall's blacksmith shop stood "where the Methodist Church now stands, just south of the old grave-yard."* A curious indication of the "historic continuity" maintained in this ancient village, is to be seen in the fact that the same stipulation—"reserving liberty for the town to fetch stones"—is found a hundred years before, 22 March, 1681, when the proprietors give David

1681.

* Information from Mr. Albert Williamson, Bedford.

1681.

Waterbury permission "to rone his home-lot fence to the rock commonly called Bates his Hill."

Although the action that determined the site was taken thus early, some years elapsed before the Meeting-house was built. As ultimately erected, it was a structure of respectable size, twenty-two feet in width, by forty feet in depth, and "ten feet and a half between joints." It was no rude log-cabin, as some of the first habitations doubtless were, but a frame building, "clap-boarded and shingled," the whole work done "in a town way," at public expense, and under the supervision of persons duly chosen at the town meeting.*

How long this first building may have stood, we do not know. In process of time—perhaps in the early part of the next century—the primitive sanctuary waxing old and decaying, a new one was erected, and in a different locality. As the population increased, and farms were laid out in the undivided lands west and north of the settlement,

* "October 15th, 1689: At a town meeting, the town doth agree to build Mr. Abraham Ambler, senor, a frame fortye foots long & twenty two foots wide and to set it up fit for clabording & shingling and to rais it up by the last of March to come after the date hereof, & the house above mentioned is to be teen foots & a half between ioynts and this frame above mentioned is to be set up upon the consideration that Mr. Abraham Ambler, senor will com up as often as he can conveniently to cary on the Lord's day amongst us one year yt he may settle with us."

It is evident from the dimensions given in these specifications that the house thus described could not have been intended for a dwelling, and must have been the Meeting House, the building of which had been urged upon the settlers by Mr. Ambler of Stamford.

the inhabitants living at a distance would naturally demand that the church should be brought nearer to their own homes. Another site may therefore have been chosen as a compromise between conflicting claims. The second church was built about one hundred rods north-west of the first one, at the foot of the hill upon which the third edifice—lately abandoned for the present sanctuary—was built after the Revolution.

Early in the following winter a Minister was called.* It has been stated that JOHN PRUDDEN came to Bedford and preached here for some time.† This, however, is a mistake. Mr. Prudden, of Jamaica, continued the Minister of that town for ten full years from the date of his call in 1676.‡ Later, he became pastor of the Presbyterian church of Newark, New Jersey, where he died in the year 1725, in a good old age.§ Bedford remained for three years without a resident Minis-

1681.
2 December.

* "At a meeting at ye hop ground the proprietors . . . agree to give Mr Priddon of Gemeco [Jamaica] a call to be a minester in this place. Joseph Theale is chosen to goe to Mr. Priddon to declare theire mind in order to his coming among them as above : and Abra. Ambler is desired to write to Mr. Pridon in theire name and behalf." (Town Records.)

† Bolton, *History of Westchester Co.*, vol. I., p. 21. A Brief History of the Presbyterian Church at Bedford, N. Y., by Rev. P. B. Heroy, New York : 1874, p. 2.

‡ *Documentary History of New York*, Vol. III., p. 196.

§ *Two Centuries in the History of the Presbyterian Church, Jamaica, L. I.*, by James M. Macdonald, D.D., New York : 1862, pp. 70, 80.

1681
to
1684.

ter. We are not to infer that the people during this time were as sheep having no shepherd. Though formed into a separate town, they still belonged to the *parish* of Stamford. John Bishop, the second pastor of the church in Stamford, was still living.* Our settlers, nearly all, had grown to man's estate under his care and teaching. Mr. Bishop had once walked all the way from Boston, with staff and Bible in hand, when called to the field where he laboured for fifty years; and though now an old man, he was still in active service. No doubt his voice was heard, from time to time, in the new settlement at Bedford; and no doubt, on the high days of the Puritan year—the Fast day, Thanksgiving day, and especially the sacrament Sabbath—not a few of these dwellers in the remote part of the parish would make their appearance in the stone “meeting-house” at Stamford, which they themselves had helped to build ten years before coming to this place. †

1684.

The first Minister actually settled in Bedford was the Reverend THOMAS DENHAM. A man of advanced years, he came to this place to spend his last days, and to find a resting-place in the cemetery under Bates' Hill. Mr. Denham had been

* John Bishop, perhaps from Dorchester, Mass., was at Taunton in 1640, and at Boston in 1644. In that year he came to Stamford, where he preached for fifty years, and died, probably in November or December, 1694. (Savage, Gen. Dict., s. v. Collections of Mass. Hist. Society, VIII., Fourth series, pp. 298.)

† Huntington, History of Stamford, Conn., pp. 123, 4, 6.

living for some years in Rye. Little is known about him previous to his stay there. The Ministers of Fairfield and Stamford had recommended him upon his coming to Rye as a suitable person for the work, and the General Court at Hartford had encouraged his settlement.* It is thought that he was the son of John Dunham † of Plymouth, Massachusetts, and that he was living in Sheepscott, Maine, at the time of the outbreak of King Philip's war. ‡ It seems probable that Mr. Bishop, who was instrumental in his settlement at Rye, may have induced him to remove to Bedford to minister to a portion of his own flock. Mr. Denham's pastorate here lasted about five years—from 1684 to 1689.§ In addition to his stipend of twenty pounds a year, the Minister was provided with a house and a home lot, and received a share in the successive divisions of the common

1675.
24 June.

* Public Records of Conn., Vol. II., pp. 321, 322.

† The name is written indifferently *Dunham* and *Denham*.

‡ History of Rye, Westchester Co., N. Y., pp. 278, 285, *note*.

§ Mr. Denham is believed to have left Rye in 1684 (Hist. of Rye, u. s.), and to have come at that time to Bedford.

At a town meeting, 28 January, 1687, collectors were chosen to gather Mr. Denham's rate for this year, and were also empowered "to gather the remainder that is behind of *the former years*, and make payment of it to Mr. Denham." The town appointed a committee, 22 June, 1688, to see to the finishing of Mr. Dunham's house. December 13, 1688, five pounds were appropriated to Mr. Dunham "upon the account of his chimblies." His will (see History of Rye, N. Y., p. 280), is dated May 2d, 1688. He was probably deceased by October, 1689, when Mr. Abraham Ambler was invited "to carry on the Lord's day."

1689.

lands. His rights as a proprietor, both in Bedford and in Rye, descended to his eldest son, Isaac Denham, who became one of the leading men in the latter place. His "Library of Bookes," including a "Commentary upon the Revelations," and another "Upon the Romans," was valued at six pounds in the appraisement of his effects. In curious apposition with these treasures his will makes mention of his "white horse," his "musquett and longe gun," and his "two-edged sword," the indispensable equipments of the pioneer pastor in those rude and anxious times.*

1683.
24 November.

For twenty years after the settlement of the town, Bedford continued to regard itself as an integral part of New England. It is true, that, in the year 1683, New York and Connecticut agreed upon that zigzag boundary line, which, beginning at the mouth of the Byram River, ran first to the north-west, and then to the north-east, in such a manner as to shut out Rye and Bedford, both of them Connecticut plantations, from that colony into the province of New York. But Rye and Bedford were no parties to this contract, which they ignored practically, and at last repudiated openly. Connecticut, itself, unwillingly consented to the surrender of these towns, secretly hoping that the agreement for their cession, having failed

* The General Court of Hartford granted him the sum of ten pounds "in regard to his late loss by the war." (Public Records of Conn., Vol. II., pp. 321, 322.) His will mentions his "Estate in Sheep's Gutt."

to receive the royal sanction, would never be carried into effect. For twenty years, then, the people remained in a state of chronic uneasiness and disaffection. It was not only that their sympathies, social and religious, leaned toward Connecticut, but their material interests were in jeopardy. Under the chartered government of the colony, they were secured in the possession of their lands, which they had honestly bought from the Indians, and diligently improved. But no sooner had their town been annexed to New York, than notice came to them from the sheriff of Westchester County, bidding them show what right and title they had to their lands. Instead of obeying this summons, the inhabitants applied to Connecticut for a patent confirming their territory to them under the laws of that colony. The patent, however, was not obtained until January, 1697, when the General Court at Hartford openly received the towns of Rye and Bedford, and "undertook their protection" as members of that commonwealth. Three years later, the question in dispute was settled by an order of the king in council, remanding these towns to the jurisdiction of New York.

1685.
4 June.

1697.
19 January.

1700.
29 March.

All this while, Bedford continued without a Minister, except during Mr. Denham's pastorate (1684-1689). Meantime, however, the interests of religion were not neglected. The town itself looked after them: the calling of a Minister, the providing for his support, the ordering of public worship in his absence, being as much the care of the civil

authority, as the laying out of the common lands, or the gathering of taxes. The town appoints one and another to "carry on the Lord's day," or conduct the simple services of prayer, exhortation, and praise. The town appoints David Mead to beat the drum—the primitive substitute for the church-going bell. The town, by a major vote, orders that there shall be a request made to the Ministers of the county—meaning Fairfield County, Connecticut,—“to inquire for us, and to acquaint us where we may be likely to attaine to a Minister: and for his encouragement we doe agree upon serious consideration for his encouragement to give him a home lot and forty acres of land and meadow, and thirty pounds a year in current provision pay.”* In those early times, when, of all the perils of the wilderness to which a community was exposed, the “dreadful tendency to barbarism”† was felt to be the greatest danger, it was seen, at least in New England, that religion was vital to public order and health, and that nothing else more nearly concerned the citizen and the State.

Coming at length under the government of New

* “*Provision pay.*” “Until the first issue of paper money by the colony in 1709, nearly all payments were made in provisions. . . From the first settlement to the French war of 1745, there was hardly any specie in circulation.”—(*History of Simsbury*, p. 56.)

† Historical Discourse, delivered at Norwich, June 23, 1859, before the General Association of Connecticut, at the celebration of its 150th anniversary. By Leonard Bacon, D.D., p. 47 (in Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut).

York, Bedford found itself transposed from the parish of Stamford to the parish of Rye. The Provincial Assembly of New York had passed, eight years before, an "Act for Settling a Ministry in the City and County of New York," and in three adjacent counties.* Four "parishes" were created by this Act, one of which included Rye, Mamaroneck, and Bedford. No mention was made in this law of any particular religious denomination. The people of the province were "generally dissenters," and the Assembly, which contained at the time but a single member of the Church of England, had certainly no intention of establishing Episcopacy in any town or county of the province. But the governor, a zealous and unscrupulous partisan of that Church, was bent upon such a construction of the Act: and he and his

1693.
19 September.

* Laws of New York, Vol. I., pp. 18-20. It is to be regretted that the revised edition of the History of Westchester County should contain the two-fold misstatement, that "Under the Act of 1693, the *Church of England* . . . was settled *throughout the Province*."—(Vol. I., p. 59.) The title of the Act expressly limits its operation to the four counties above named, and, moreover, it makes no mention of the Church of England. The Assembly which passed it represented a population of "dissenters . . . averse to the Church of England." "The people," said Lewis Morris, "who never could be brought to settle an Episcopal ministry in direct terms, *fancied they had made an effectual provision for ministers of their own persuasion* by this Act."—(See Work and Materials for American History, by Geo. H. Moore, LL.D., in the *Historical Magazine*, Vols. I., II. Also, Civil Status of the Presbyterians in the Province of New York, in the *Magazine of American History*, Oct., 1879.)

successors, down to the period of the Revolution, insisted upon its enforcement for the sole benefit of the Anglican clergy. Bedford was one of the towns mentioned in the Act of 1693, and Colonel Fletcher was only waiting for the arrival of a missionary, a clergyman of that Church, to induct him as Minister of the parish. But Bedford had now secured a Minister of its own; the church lands, by act of the town, were in his possession, and Lord Cornbury found no opportunity, under pretext of a vacancy, to foist a stranger upon an unwilling people.

JOSEPH MORGAN,* your second pastor, was called by the town in December, 1699. The Ministers of Fairfield County ordained him in the following year. About the same time the people of East Chester, New York, sought his services, and petitioned the governor of the province to appoint him as their Minister.† He appears to have officiated in both places—over thirty miles apart—for the first two years, after which he confined his labours to East Chester. The people of Bedford had hoped that their young pastor would

* Born in New London, Conn., Nov. 6, 1674; licensed, 1697; preached in Greenwich, Conn. (first church), 1697-1700; ordained, 1700; preached in Bedford and East Chester, N. Y., 1700-1704; settled in Greenwich (second church), 1705-1708; settled in Freehold, N. J., 1709-1728; preached in Maidenhead [Lawrenceville], N. J., and in Hopewell [Pennington], N. J., for some years; died in, or after, 1740.

† History of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the County of Westchester [N. Y.], by Robert Bolton, p. 364.

“live and die with” them, and had taken measures to have him inducted by the Governor,* but, for some reason which does not appear, his stay here was short. It was the beginning, however, of a long and fruitful ministry, the greater part of which was spent in New Jersey, and was attended with large success. Morgan was a fluent and forcible speaker, and wrote much for the press. Cotton Mather was his friend and correspondent, and Franklin printed one of his sermons. His writings are characterized, as his preaching doubtless was also, by an impetuosity bordering on extravagance; † but there is reason to believe, that, in spite of marked foibles and some serious faults, he was a sincere and a useful man.

1700.
12 June.

He was followed at Bedford by the Reverend JOHN JONES. ‡ The very curious correspondence

* History of the Presbyterian Church in America, by the Rev. Richard Webster, p. 335. A misprint (*indicted* for *inducted*), in Dr. Webster's statement, has given rise to the impression that Morgan, while in Bedford, was accused of some penal offence, and was *i* indicted and tried, “but acquitted.” (A Brief History, etc., by Rev. P. B. Heroy, p. 7.) There is no evidence of any such trial.

† I found a strange rhapsodical letter from Morgan, dated March 23, 1719, at Freehold, N. J., in one of the letter-books of the Gospel Propagation Society, London.

‡ A son of William Jones, of New Haven; born Oct. 4th, 1667; graduated at Harvard College, 1690. Subsequent to his ministry in Bedford, he preached in Greenwich, Conn., “a year and a half,” says Savage (Gen. Dict. of First Settlers of N. E., vol. II., p. 563), but certainly longer, and probably from 1710 till 1714. (Historical Discourse, by Rev. J. H. Lindsley, D.D., Greenwich, Conn., pp. 22, 23.) “He was drowned in the harbour, 28 Jan., 1719, by breaking through the ice.” (Gen. Dict., u. s.)

^{1702.}
7 December.

between this Minister and the inhabitants at the time of his call, * shows that he hesitated to settle here, because uncertain whether the government would allow and approve his ministry "free from impositions" which he could not comply with. His fears on this score were not groundless, as the event proved, for a Church of England missionary had now been appointed in charge of Rye and Bedford; and in due time there came an order for his induction. Rye, just then, had neither Minister nor house of worship; and the inhabitants, by the special efforts of their rich neighbour Colonel Heathcote, were persuaded for a while to submit to the new order of things. But it was otherwise with Bedford. The people were now alive to the danger of losing their religious rights. Two years before this, both Bedford and East Chester, † while under Mr. Morgan's ministry, had sought to be released from the operations of the Act of 1693, and left free to support a Minister of their own choice. Bedford showed special earnestness in pressing this request. The people, assembled in their town meeting, declared it to be their desire "that they may be by themselves [so] as to maintain one

^{1704.}
April.

^{1702.}
4 October.

* Originally published by Mr. Heroy, in his *Historical Discourse*, and reprinted in the revised edition of the *History of Westchester County*, by the late Rev. Robert Bolton, vol. I., pp. 46, 47.

† "Eastchester, having an Independent minister, endeavoured at my coming to make themselves a distinct parish."—Mr. Bartow to the G. P. S., May 25, 1703. (*History of the Prot. Episc. Church in Westchester Co.*, p. 22.)

among themselves: and their desire is that they may be clear from ye former act of ye assembly of being joyned to Rye and Memerinock; and the town doth desire Mr. Jacobus van Cortlandt to present their desire and pertision to the Generall Assembly and ye town is willing to satisfie sd Cortland for his trouble." * These efforts had been vain. The shrewd rector of Westchester wrote home to England: "There have been great endeavours made this session to annul that Act; but we are safe as long as my Lord Cornbury is governor." † Bedford was destined to remain a part of the parish of Rye until the Revolution. The people, however, found it difficult to accept the situation gracefully. Upon the arrival of Mr. Pritchard, ‡ to "take possession of this portion of his benefice," § they displayed a stubborn and unmanageable spirit truly astounding. Young Benjamin Wright, and Mr. John Thomson, gentleman, of London, lately removed from Stamford into this place, testify under oath, that all their endeavours to prevail with the inhabitants to encourage Mr. Pritchard have been fruitless. Zachariah Roberts, the justice of the peace, is es

1704,¹
April.

* Town Records of Bedford.

† History of the Prot. Episc. Church in Westchester Co., p. 13

‡ The Rev. Thomas Pritchard was sent in 1704, by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, to be its missionary at Rye, Westchester Co., N. Y. His brief ministry ended deplorably in March or April of the next year. (Bolton, History of the P. E. Church in Westchester Co., p. 146.)

§ Id., p. 619.

1705.

pecially violent in his opposition. He refuses to take any affidavits in behalf of the Church of England, the Queen, and the government of New York. He has procured the passage of an act, at the town meeting, enjoining upon the people not to pay Mr. Pritchard anything. As for Mr. Jones, he preaches with great bitterness, referring in terms far from complimentary to the Church of England, and the government of New York; and winding up his diatribe by saying to his congregation, "Ye may tell'em so at York, for that he did not care for my Lord the Governor." As for the people, the greatest part of them are ripe for rebellion.* All this was very disturbing; and we

* The affidavits of Benjamin Wright and John Thomson are printed in the Documentary History of New York, vol. III., pp. 933, 4, 5. For the following papers, not before published, from the Colonial Manuscripts in the office of the Secretary of State, Albany, I am indebted to the accomplished and obliging curator, Mr. Berthold Fernow.

John Tomson and Benjamin Wright both of Competent Age Testify that they have been sore oppressed with the continuall reflections of Mr. John Jones in his Preaching in Bedford Continually reflecting against the Church of England's present Government that he cares not for the said Church nor my Lord that he cares not for anything but to get away what they have for taxes ye said Jones and Robarts are very dangerous men Against the Church and Government and that the said Jones do persist in Continually reflections as aforesaid Saying Come out of her my people least ye partake of her plagues With Continually reflections against the Church of England . . . that they are in a dangerous Government where they do not pray nor serve God and that the said Jones do and wou'd Preach Reprobation in defiance of Principalities and Powers that they should tell them at Yorke that he wou'd do so and that he wou'd burne the [books of the] Church of England

1705.
8 May

are not surprised to learn that the offending justice and Minister were called to account for their conduct before the governor and council. Mr. Jones was required to give surety for his appearance, and Zachariah Roberts was remanded into the custody of the sheriff of the city, till the next session of the Supreme Court of the province.†

Especially those that was brought from Colonel Heathcote and that the friends of the Church wou'd desire the Reverend Mr. Pritchard to come there to preach but cannot prevaile whereby some of them are forced to quitt the place for feare of damage to their Bodys being made so vnhappy and vneasy thereby, that the greatest parte of the Inhabitants are ripe or ready for Rebellion abundantly more than is here Expressed.

John Thomson.

Benjamin Wright.

(N. Y. Colonial MSS., vol. L, f. 75.)

† The Depositions of John Thompson and Benjamin Wright of Bedford agt one John Jones a Dissenting Minister of Bedford for speaking severall Irreverant Words agt the Church of England and many seditious words agt the Government being read, the s^d Jones was Called into the Councill Chamber and the said Depositions being likewise read to him and he not having given sufficient satisfaction thereon to this Board it is Ordered that the s^d Jn^o Jones wth sufficient sureties enter into recognizance for £25. — — to appear at the next Supream Court to be held for the Province to answer such things as shall be alleged in behalf of her Maj^{tie}.

The depositions of the s^d Thompson and Wright agt Zachariah Roberts of the same place a Justice of y^e Peace for severall illegall and unwarrantable practices being read and the s^d Roberts being Called in to the Councill Chamber to whom the s^d Depositions were likewise read and he having given no satisfactory answers thereon to this Board it is ordered, that the s^d Zachariah Roberts remain in the hands of the Sherriffe of the City and County of New Yorke till the next Supream Court to be held for the Province there to answer such things as shall be brought and objected agt him in behalfe of Our Sovereigne Lady y^e Queen.

(Council Minutes, ix., p. 513 (May 8th, 1705).)

1705.

His apprehensions of interference on the part of the government fully realized, Mr. Jones left Bedford in 1705.* And now the people, perhaps hoping to be allowed the exercise of their right under the Act of 1693, applied to the governor for leave to settle a Minister of their own choosing.† Lord Cornbury delayed answering the petition until he could consult the new missionary at Rye, as incumbent of the parish that included Bedford. This was Mr. Muirson ‡—"an abdicated Scotch Jacobite parson," as a writer of the period styles him—"obtruded upon" the Bedford people, and "that insults intolerably over them."§ Mr. Muirson's opinion of the Bedford people was not more flattering than this opinion of him. "Every fourth Sunday I preach at Bedford," he writes home to the Gospel Propagation Society, "and I am afraid without success, for they are a very wilful, stubborn people."|| Each of these statements, how-

1706.
22 May.

* "Lately an Independent minister hath removed out of it." (Rev. George Muirson, 21 Nov., 1705. Bolton, History of the P. E. Church in Westchester Co., p. 151.)

† Webster, History of the Presb. Church in America, p. 335.

‡ The Rev. George Muirson was sent over in 1705 to succeed Mr. Pritchard at Rye. He died there, 12 Oct., 1708.

§ "The late petition of Bedford for calling a Minister, is not yet answered, until an abdicated Scotch Jacobite Parson, obtruded upon them, that insults intolerably over them, is consulted with."—A Narrative of a New and Unusual Imprisonment of Two Presbyterian Ministers, and Prosecution of Mr. Francis Makemie, for preaching One Sermon in the City of New York.—Epistle to the Reader.

|| Bolton, History of the P. E. Church in Westchester Co., p. 166.

ever, must be taken with some allowance. Mr. Muirson was really a laborious and self-sacrificing Minister, faithful to his convictions of duty; whose death, at the early age of thirty-three, was hastened by his fatigues and privations in his Master's service. And the Bedford people may certainly be pardoned for some degree of "stubbornness" at the time. Dissatisfied with their recent change of government, and chafing under Lord Cornbury's brutal rule, they could have been in no mood to submit to that which they regarded as an unwarrantable intrusion upon their rights of conscience. Nor do they seem to have flinched in after days from the decided stand thus taken. A quarter of a century later, they still had the name of being "the most rigid and severe of all the Dissenters,"* in this region of so-called Dissent. The fact is, they were simply very thorough and inveterate Presbyterians.

1706.

1731.

They were Presbyterians, that is, in the larger sense in which that name was used from the beginning among the Connecticut churches. No presbytery, indeed, had yet been organized in America, at the time when this town was founded. But the ecclesiastical system that prevailed in Connecticut was one that bore a close affinity with the Presbyterian order, and that was frequently designated, even at a very early day, as Presbyterian.

The commissioners sent by Charles II. to Connecticut were instructed to inform themselves of

* Bolton, History of the P. E. Church in Westchester Co., p. 256.

^{1664.}
23 April.

the full difference between the people of that colony and those of Massachusetts; the king conceiving "those of Conecticott to contrive themselves under the most rigid Presbyterian Government."*

^{1665.}
14 December.

The commissioners' report confirmed this impression. "For the most part they are rigid Presbyterians." † The principal friends and patrons of this colony in England, from the beginning, and many of those who came over to settle here, were avowed Presbyterians. ‡ A tendency that became more and more pronounced, and that resulted in the formation and adoption of the Saybrook Platform, was apparent at a very early day. §

^{1708.}
20 September.

Under the Saybrook Platform, which, according to Dr. Hodge, comes very little short of Presbyterianism, the Consociation "possessed substantially the same authority as Presbytery." The fundamental principle by which Congregationalism is distinguished from Presbyterianism, is "that every local congregation of believers . . . is a complete church, and not to be subject in government

* Documents relating to the Colonial History of the State of New York, Vol. III., p. 55.

† Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, 1661-1668; p. 341.

‡ The Constitutional History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, by Charles Hodge, D.D., part I., pp. 31, 34.

§ Historical Discourse, etc., by Leonard Bacon, D.D., pp. 15, *seq.*—"Most of the Puritans who went over to New England were attached to a species of Presbyterianism, rather than to Independency."—Orme's Life of Owen; quoted in the "Presbyterian Quarterly Review," vol. VII., p. 433, *note*.

to any ecclesiastical authority outside of itself."* Clearly recognizing this principle, the Hartford North Association, comprising some of the leading Ministers of Connecticut, declared in 1799, "that the constitution of the churches" in that State, "founded on the common usages, and the Confession of Faith, Heads of Agreement, and Articles of Church Discipline, adopted at the earliest period of the settlement of that State, is *not Congregational*,† but contains the essentials of the government of the Church of Scotland, or Presbyterian Church in America, particularly as it gives a decisive power to ecclesiastical councils; and a Consociation, consisting of Ministers and messengers, or a lay representative from the churches, is possessed of substantially the same authority as Presbytery.‡ . . . The churches therefore in Con-

* Rev. A. S. Quint, D.D., in *Cyclopædia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, vol. II., p. 475.

† Dr. Bellamy (1744) held that a church receiving the Saybrook Platform departed from Congregational principles.—(Bellamy Papers, MS.).

‡ The following illustrations may be given, from the minutes of the Eastern Consociation of Fairfield County:—In 1746, the Consociation "pronounce the awful sentence of Excommunication" upon a member of a church under their care. In 1759, at the desire of "a considerable number of ye society," they dismiss the pastor of a congregation. In 1763, the church in Danbury dissenting from the Saybrook Platform, declaring itself a Congregational church, and refusing to submit to the jurisdiction of any Consociated authority, the Consociation resolve that they have the right of jurisdiction, notwithstanding the doings and votes of said church. Occasionally the Consociation is designated in these minutes, as "the Presbytery."

1708.

necticut at large, and in our district in particular, are not now, and never were, from the earliest period of our settlement, Congregational churches, according to the ideas and forms of church order contained in the Book of Discipline called the Cambridge Platform. There are, however, scattered over the State, perhaps ten or twelve churches [unconsociated] which are properly called Congregational."

Thus there was much to justify the usage in accordance with which, from early times, and down to a period comparatively recent, the churches of Connecticut have been familiarly styled Presbyterian. Such, at all events, was the designation of the Bedford church from the beginning.* It is to be presumed that under the Saybrook Platform this congregation came under the care of the Association of Fairfield County; for though in a political sense ceded to the province of New York, Bedford continued until about the year 1720 to be regarded from the Connecticut point of view as belonging, ecclesiastically, to the parish of Stamford;† and it is reasonable to

* "There is a Presbyterian preacher at Bedford" (Rev. Robert Jenney, of Rye: 1722). "There are three meeting houses in the parish, one at Bedford, built for, and used by the Presbyterians." "At Bedford they have had a Presbyterian minister" (Rev. James Wetmore, of Rye: 1728). Bolton, *History of the P. E. Church in Westchester Co.*, pp. 222, 249.

† Huntington, *History of Stamford, Conn.*, p. 145. The records of Fairfield County Association, for this period, unfortunately, do not exist.

suppose that during the long period of destitution that intervened, the Ministers at Stamford officiated, at least occasionally, in the "meeting house" at Bedford.

For fifteen years after the removal of Mr. Jones from Bedford, the town was without a resident Minister. Failing in their appeal to the Assembly, and finding resistance to the governor's arbitrary rule useless, the people gave up the struggle, and submitted to a wrong which was not to be redressed while the colonial government lasted. They were taxed year by year for the support of the Church of England missionary at Rye, twenty miles off; the constable of the town being required to collect the quota assessed upon this part of the missionary's "parish," and pay the amount in half-yearly instalments to the church-wardens. Occasionally, too, a special assessment was added for the completion of the church at Rye, and the repair of the Minister's house.* Compelled to carry this load, the people of Bedford appear to have felt for several years that it would be impossible to bear the expense of supporting also a ministry of

1705
to
1720.

* The Records of the Vestry show that from the year 1711—when the Records begin—to the year 1719, the average yearly amount levied upon the town of Bedford, as its quota toward the salary of the missionary at Rye, and other expenses of the parish (including "Beating the Drum") was £11, 8, 1. From 1722 to 1731 the average amount was £13, 6, 11. From 1732 to 1740, £14, 12, 1. From 1741 to 1750, £20, 10, 8. From 1750 to 1760, £22, 2, 7. From 1760 to 1770, £47, 5, 9. From 1770 to 1776, £99, 18, 11.

their own.* Perhaps they may have been sustained by the hope that an opportunity to escape from this oppressive yoke might present itself. Such an opportunity came at last, as they thought, in the year 1719, upon the death of Mr. Bridge,† the third rector of Rye. A vacancy of three years followed. During this vacancy the “Minister’s rate” remained ungathered throughout the parish; and the inhabitants of Rye, “being for the most part such as were desirous of having a dissenting teacher settled” there,‡ took occasion, in the exercise of their supposed rights, to invite a Presbyterian Minister to their church. This Minister was the Reverend Stephen Buckingham, who was called to Rye early in the year 1720,§ and remained for more than two years.|| It was at the same

1719.
22 May.

* “The people there are very poor, and incapable to maintain two differing ministers.” This was said in 1722 of the people of Rye: it was doubtless equally true of the people of Bedford. (Bolton, *History of the Prot. Episc. Church in Westchester Co.*, p. 214.)

† The Rev. Christopher Bridge was inducted Rector of the Parish of Rye, 17 October, 1710, and died in that office 22 May, 1719.

‡ *History of the Prot. Episc. Church in Westchester Co.*, p. 221.

§ “They have resolved to call one Mr. Buckingham, a Dissenting minister, and have accordingly sent to acquaint him with it.”—Mr. Poyer to the G. P. Society, 11 Feb., 1719–20. (Id., p. 212.)

|| “The want of a missionary so long at Rye has introduced a dissenter to build his nest there.” Mr. Thomas to the G. P. Society, 20 April, 1722. “There is a Presbyterian preacher at Bedford, and there was another at Rye, when I came here.” Mr. Jenney to the G. P. Society, 15 Dec., 1722. (Id., pp. 213, 222.) The Rev. Robert Jenney, Mr. Bridge’s successor, came to Rye in June, 1722.

time, and by concert of action, doubtless, with the people of Rye, that the inhabitants of Bedford called to their town that eminent man whose name is intimately associated with the early history of Presbyterianism and of evangelical religion in this country, the Reverend WILLIAM TENNENT.*

It was probably under Mr. Tennent's ministry that this church came for the first time under the care of a Presbytery. A clergyman of the Irish Episcopal Church, he had removed to America less than two years before, and had joined the Synod of Philadelphia, upon giving his reasons for dissenting from the doctrines and practices of prelacy. After preaching for eighteen months in East Chester, New York, he came to Bedford. He was now forty-eight years old; and his four sons, Gilbert, William, John, and Charles, were youths nine to seventeen years of age. Bedford has no

1720
to
1727.

1720.
3 May.

* Born in Ireland about 1672. Ordained deacon 1 July, 1704, and priest 22 Sept., 1706, by the Bishop of Down. Married in the County of Down, Ireland, 15 May, 1702, to Catharine, daughter of Rev. Gilbert Kennedy, of Ayrshire, Scotland. Arrived in Philadelphia 6 Sept., 1718. Admitted a member of the Synod of Philadelphia 17 Sept., 1718. Settled in the parish of East Chester, N. Y., 22 Nov., 1718. Removed to Bedford, N. Y., 3 May, 1720. Removed to Neshaminy, Bucks Co., Penn., in 1726 or 1727. Continued pastor of the church in that place until 1742. Died in Neshaminy, 6 May, 1745. His widow died in Philadelphia, 7 May, 1753, aged seventy years. "His tombstone, in the graveyard of Neshaminy Church, incorrectly gives the date of his death as May 6, 1746. It should be 1745." History of Neshaminy Presbyterian Church of Warwick, Hartsville, Bucks County, Pa., 1726-1876. By Rev. D. K. Turner. Philadelphia: 1876. Page 65.

1720
to
1727.

more interesting association than that of the presence of this remarkable family within its precincts. Their home was in the northeastern part of the town, at "Cantito," the region since illustrated by the residence of the honoured John Jay. Here a farm was laid out for the new Minister, at the time of his coming, in the common lands between the Cisco and Cross rivers; and an additional tract of twenty-three acres on the eastern side of the "former bounds" was given him five years later. We follow in imagination the father and the sons in their labours upon this rude farm, their wanderings through the forest in pursuit of the game with which the region still abounded, and their Sabbath day's journey of five miles to the "meeting house" on the village green.

Mr. Tennent's stay in Bedford has been hitherto represented as very brief—covering a few months, or at the most, a year.* But from the references to his ministry which I have discovered in the records of this town, as well as in those of the adjoining town of Stamford,† I am able to

* The General Assembly's Missionary Magazine, May, 1805 (vol. II.)—Biographical Sketches of the Founder and Principal Alumni of the Log College. Collected and edited by A. Alexander, D.D., Princeton, N. J., 1845, pp. 20, 22.—Annals of the American Pulpit, vol. III., p. 24.

† At a Town meeting in Stamford, Conn., 25 Dec., 1722, "the request of James White of y^e Long Ridg and y^e rest of his neighbours concerning their minister's rate Desiring the Liberty of paying so much money as they are obliged to pay to y^e minister's rate in this town, to y^e minister in Bedford" was granted "to y^m and y^e Inhabitants of y^e Chestnut Ridg namely Dibble Conkling and

show that he continued to be the pastor of this church for more than six years — from the first of May, 1720, at least to the latter part of August, 1726.

1720
to
1727.

Our information regarding the early years of Tennent's ministry in America is very scanty and unsatisfactory. The dates of his arrival in Philadelphia, his settlement in East Chester, New York, and his removal to Bedford, are known.* It has been generally supposed that from Bedford he went in 1721 or 1722 to Bensalem, in Pennsylvania, where he continued until the year 1726. During this time, however, he was almost uniformly absent from the sessions of the Synod of Philadelphia, sometimes sending by letter reasons for his absence, which were sustained. This fact would seem inexplicable, upon the hypothesis that Tennent was then preaching in Bensalem, within twenty miles of Philadelphia.† It is now certain that he

Corey upon this consideration that they bring a note from under y^e hand of y^e Reverend Mr. Tenants, that they have paid the same to him before y^e next town meeting." At a Town meeting, 11 Dec., 1723, the town "grants y^e same liberty to y^e inhabitants of y^e Long Ridg and y^e Chestnut Ridg of paying their ministers rate to Bedford as was granted y^e last year they bringing from under M^r Tenants hand that they have paid y^e s^d taxes to Bedford." (Town Records of Stamford, Conn., Book No. 2, pp. 141, 142.) The same permission was given in December, 1724 and 1725.

* Memoranda in the hand-writing of Mr. Tennent, quoted by Dr. Alexander, Log College, pp. 248, 249, *note*.

† "It is not probable that the History of Log College is correct in stating that Mr. Tennent was in Bensalem from 1721 to 1726, for during that time a pastor of another name, a Dutch min-

1720
to
1727.

remained in Bedford until the latter part of August, 1726: and it would seem probable that his removal to Neshaminy may not have occurred before the following spring or summer.*

The references to Mr. Tennent in the town records of Bedford are numerous, and their tone implies that he was held in very high consideration. It is evident from the action taken by the people on several occasions that they were exceedingly anxious to retain him as their Minister. Besides his salary of forty pounds, made up by voluntary contributions, and collected by a committee of the "society," he received repeated grants of land, amounting in all to several hundred acres. But the support was meagre, at best; and with a

ister, had charge of the Bensalem Church, at least two or three years. At what time exactly Mr. Tennent came to Neshaminy is doubtful; but his absence from the Synod at Philadelphia seven years out of eight, from 1719 to 1727, being present only in 1721, would indicate that he did not reside in Pennsylvania; for from 1727 to 1741, when he left the Synod and joined the New Brunswick Presbytery, he was present at the meetings of Synod every year but one. He was absent in 1735. It is probable, therefore, that he did not come to Pennsylvania to reside permanently till 1726, when he came to Neshaminy."—History of Neshaminy Presbyterian Church, page 11, *note*.

* That Mr. Tennent's removal from Bedford to Neshaminy may not have occurred before the spring of 1727, would appear probable, from the fact that he was still absent from the Synod of Philadelphia in September, 1726; from the allusion to his departure, in the correspondence of the Rev. James Wetmore, of Rye, in 1728, as of recent occurrence; and from the date (1727) of the erection of the first house of worship in Neshaminy. (History of Neshaminy Church, page 13.)

large family to provide for, he found it necessary at length to depart. Perhaps the last appropriation of land to Mr. Tennent, in November, 1725, may have been made with the hope of altering his determination. What the result might have been, if this eminent servant of God could have remained with his attached people, and if from this centre the Gospel as preached by him and by his gifted sons could have sounded out through this region, it is interesting to conjecture. But the oppressive course of the colonial government, in taxing the town for the benefit of the Church of England, prevented the people from adequately supporting the ministry of their own choice. During the latter years of Mr. Tennent's stay in Bedford, this "precinct" of the "parish of Rye" was again assessed for the salary of the Anglican missionary in that place. If they had hoped for relief from this exaction after Mr. Bridge's death, in 1719, the people were soon to be disappointed. In 1722, the Justices and Vestry were required by the new rector* to raise the money due for the past three years, and pay it over to the church wardens. Upon their refusal, Mr. Jenney procured a writ of mandamus to compel payment. The following receipt, which has been preserved by one of the old families of the

1725.
8 November.

* The Rev. Robert Jenney was appointed in 1722 by the Gospel Propagation Society to be its Missionary at Rye. In 1726 he removed to Hempstead, L. I., and thence in 1742 to Philadelphia, where he was for twenty years rector of Christ Church. He died 5 Jan., 1762, aged seventy-five years.

1726.

town,* relates to the period of Mr. Tennent's ministry, and testifies to one of the grievances under which the Presbyterians of Bedford suffered during the colonial times :

“Rec^d y^e first of Aprill 1726 from Richard Holmes Constable of Bedford for 1724, Eleven pounds Sixteen shilling with his Collection for y^e Ministrs Rate that year, in full of his warrant I say Re^d p^r me. JOHN HORTON.”†

As every trace of Mr. Tennent's residence in Bedford must be of interest to the members of this church, I transcribe here from the records of the town the grants of land made to him, together with the conveyances which he executed upon his departure from the place.

We whose names are under written being Inhabitants of y^e Town of Bedford in Westchester County in y^e province of New York & being y^e propriators of old purchas and Cohomong purchas in y^e Township aforesd doe give grant alienate & make over unto y^e Re^d Mr William Tenant his heirs & assignes for ever all that fourteen acres of land in the East field on y^e north side

* The family of the late John C. Holmes.

† John Horton was one of the church-wardens of the parish church of Rye, in 1724.—The constables did not always perform this function of their office with a good grace. In 1730, the Justices and Vestry of Rye ordered and empowered the church-wardens “to prosecute immediately the Constables of Bedford and of the Manour of Scarsdale, who are behind of paying in y^e parish Rate.” (Records of Vestry.)

of a way & joyning to y^e land of Thomas Chambers east & north the said M^r Tennant relinquishing his right to fourteen acres of land that is to be laid out in y^e first hundred acres to be laid out to him by virtue of a grant from Joseph Holmes & Jonathan Miller juner &c as witness our hands this first day of March annoq^e 172 $\frac{1}{2}$
Jonathan Miller Cornelius Seely Joshua Jones Thomas Wescot Daniel Holly Nathan Clark Hezekiah Roberts Richard Waring Zac^h Mills Jonathan Miller Stephen Miller Jonathan Holmes Joseph Holmes James Chambers David Holmes

1721.

At a Town meeting held at Bedford this 4th day of April 1721 this above subscription voted & confirmed Recorded by me Zac^h Mills Cler

At a meeting of y^e propriators of y^e old & Cohomong purchases in y^e Township of Bedford voted that ye Reverend M^r William Tenant shall have his hundred acres of land y^e remainder of land mentioned in his deed laid out forthwith by y^e Towns Comittee not exceeding two peices voted this 21st day of February 1721

Recorded p^r Zac^h Mills Cler

The Comittee appointed by y^e Sosity of Bedford for y^e measuring of lands appertaining to y^e abovsd Town have measured and laid out the subsequent parcel of land in favours of y^e Reve^d William Tennant in Bedford in maner following—The norwest corner by y^e road to y^e fishing pools bounded by a red oak tree upon y^e old purchas line runing southerly 24 rods to a black oak tree upon Joshua Hills bounds marked with a heap of stones about it from thence runing easterly 56 rods to a white oak tree upon Joshua Hills northeast bounds marked thence northerly by y^e space of 16 rodds to a white oak tree marked upon y^e old purchase bounds thence runing

1722.

westerly 56 rodods to y^e first tree from y^e white oak upon y^e old purchas line above specified runing easterly 168 rodd [to ?] a swamp white oak marked upon y^e old purchas bounds thence runing westerly 120 rodods to red oak marked thence runing northerly 216 rods to a white oak tree at Joshua Hills northeast corner thence to y^e place of begining 16 rods from y^e above mentioned swamp white oak tree at y^e swamps side runing westerly 40 rodods to a white oake tree marked thence northerly to a walnut stadle w^t a heap of stones about it thence ea-sterly 40 rodods y^e contents of w^c is 80 [acres?] Signed by us March y^e 20th annodom 172 $\frac{1}{2}$ John Miller Joseph Holmes Jonathan Miller

Recorded April y^e 20th 1722 p^r Zac^h Mills Cler

The Commitee appointed by y^e socity of Bedford for y^e measuring of lands appertaining to y^e abovsd Town have measured and laid y^e following peice of land for y^e Reverend William Tennant in Bedford as below specified y^e norwest corner bounded by a black oak tree extending easterly 40 rodods to a white oak tree upon y^e old purchas bounds thence runing sutherly 93 rodods to a drie white oak tree thence westerly 39 rodods to a chesnut tree marked thence northerly 100 rodd to y^e place of begining y^e contents of which is 20 acres Signed by us April y^e 13th annoq dom 1722 John Miller Zac^h Mills Joseph Holmes Jonathan Miller

Recorded Aprill y^e 20th 1722 p^r Zac^h Mills Cler

Bedford November y^e 8th 1725 Then laid out to y^e Reverend M^r William Tenant 23 acres of land sised [sized] for 18 acres begining at y^e southeast corner of sd M^r Tenents fence at Cantito thence to run easterly 32 rods to y^e edge of a swamp thence northerly 26 rods to a stake being William Hills northwest corner bounds

thence easterly 28 rod to a stake being William Hills northeast corner bounds thence along y^e rode northerly to a white oak tree marked \sqcap thence westerly 74 rods to y^e corner of sd fence thence south to y^e place of begining & also three acres to y^e southward of y^e land [of] Benjamin Kellum adjoyning to his own land begining at a white oak stadle marked being sd Mr Tenants former bounds thence running northerly to a walnut stadle marked 20 rods thence westerly 24 rods to a red oak stadle marked thence southerly 24 rods to a stake thence easterly 24 rods to y^e place of begining laid out by us Joseph Holmes Zac^h Mills Comitee

Recorded y^e date abovsd p^r Zac^h Mills Cler

This Indenture made this sixteenth day of August in y^e thirteenth year of y^e reign of our sovereign lord George by y^e grace of God of Great Brittain France and Ireland King defender of y^e faith &c and in y^e year of our Lord Jesus Christ one thousand seven hundred twenty & six & between the Reverend Mr William Tenant of Bedford in Westchester County in y^e Colony of New York of y^e one part and Isaac Quintard of Stanford in Fairfield County in y^e Colony of Conecticut merchant of y^e other part witnesseth that y^e abovsd William Tenant for & in consideration of y^e sum of forty pounds currant money of New York to him in hand paid by y^e abovsd Isaac Quintard. . . . have sold. . . unto y^e abovsd Isaac Quintard. . . one parcel or lot of land at a place called Bateses Ridg containing by estimation thirteen acres . . . and also three acres of land adjoyning to said land . . . and also one other parcel of land at a place called Kellums Ridg containing by estimation twenty acres. . . . To have and to hold [etc.]

WILLIAM TENANT.

1726.

This Indenture made this twenty-third day of August in y^e year of our Lord Christ one thousand seven hundred twenty & six & between y^e Reverend Mr William Tenant of Bedford in Westchester County in y^e Colony of New York of y^e one part and Hezekiah Roberts & Theophilus Kellum of y^e abovsd town, County & Colony yeoⁿ of y^e other part witnesseth that y^e abovsd William Tennant for & in consideration of the sum of one hundred twenty & two pounds currant money of New York. . . have sold. . . . unto y^e abovsd Theophilus Kellum & Hezekiah Roberts. . . all these several parcels of land hereafter exprest in y^e bounds of y^e abovsd Bedford at a place called Cantito & bounded as followeth one lot is bounded y^e northwest corner by y^e rode to y^e fishing falls. . . and also one other peice of land. . . laid out for eighty acres. . . and also one other peice of land laid out for forty-three acres. . . and also one other peice of land laid out for three acres. . . . To have and to hold [etc.] Signed & sealed in the presence of us Will Bradford Gilbert Tennant

WILLIAM TENNANT.

These presents witnesseth that M^{rs} Cathrin Tenant wife to y^e within Mr William Tennant doth. . . . make over all her right title interest claim or demand to y^e within devised premises. . . to y^e abovsd Hezekiah Roberts & Theophilus Kellum [etc.] Sealed & delivered in presence of Zach Mills John Tennant.*

* Town Records of Bedford. vol. II., pp. 69, 73, 95, 116, 105.

Other parcels of land, which remained in Mr. Tennant's possession, were after his decease conveyed by his son Gilbert to the trustees of the Presbyterian Church of Bedford.

May 16, 1749. Gilbert Tennent of Philadelphia in the Colony

It is with no small satisfaction that I adduce this evidence, to establish the fact that Bedford was for so long a period the home and parish of William Tennent. "The Presbyterian Church," says Dr. Alexander, "is probably not more indebted for her prosperity, and for the evangelical spirit which has generally pervaded her body, to any individual, than to the elder Tennent." We cannot doubt that his preaching and holy living, and the examples of piety furnished by his family, made an abiding impression upon this community. The dates given in the scanty traditional accounts of Tennent's life and the lives of his sons, are so confusing, that we cannot speak positively of the events that may have occurred within these seven years spent in Bedford. But it seems highly probable that during this period, Gilbert, the elder son, pursued his

1720
to
1727.

of Pennsylvania, Gentleman: Son of and heir at law unto Rev. William Tennent formerly of Bedford in Westchester County in the Colony of New York, but lately of Neshamina in the Colony of Pensilvania, Deceased, for the promoting and supporting of the gospel of Jesus Christ according and under the Presbyterian Discipline in the above said Bedford—gave to John Holmes, John Miller and Zebediah Mills, trustees, and their successors, several pieces of land, formerly possessed by his Reverend Father, for the use and support of the ministry. . . . viz., one house and home lot containing by estimation about ten acres: two lots in the east field containing eight acres each: one piece on the south side of Mahanus River, containing by estimation twelve acres; three acres on a plain called South Plain: one acre and a quarter in a meadow called Theal's meadow: one and a half acre in a meadow called David's Hill meadow: two acres and a half in a meadow called the great meadow, &c., &c.

studies for the holy ministry under his father's care, and began to preach the Gospel; that William, the second son, while visiting his brother Gilbert in New Brunswick, had that marvellous trance, the recollection of which lives in the Christian mind to this day; and that John, the third son, passed through the remarkable religious experiences of which his brother has left us so graphic an account.*

1728.
20 February.

“At Bedford they have had a Presbyterian minister,” writes Mr. Wetmore of Rye, not long after Mr. Tennent's departure. “They gave him a house and farm to work upon, and forty pounds per annum. But finding it not sufficient to support him with a numerous family, he has left them, and they are now settled with another young man, to whom they give the same allowance.”† This young man, Tennent's successor, was HENRY BALDWIN, the son of Barnabas Baldwin, of Milford, Connecticut.‡ He was graduated at Yale College, in 1726,§ and came to Bedford soon after

* Biographical Sketches of the Founder and Principal Alumni of the Log College. Together with an Account of the Revivals of Religion under their Ministry. Collected and Edited by A. Alexander, D.D.—Princeton, N. J., 1845; pp. 129-133.

† History of the Prot. Episc. Church in Westchester Co., N.Y., by R. Bolton, p. 249.

‡ Baptized 14 June, 1702.—The Baldwin Genealogy from 1500 to 1881. By Charles Candee Baldwin, M.A.—Cleveland, O., 1881.

§ It can scarcely be doubted that this Henry Baldwin is the person so named in Yale College Catalogue; though, if our presumption be correct, the Catalogue is in error in giving the date of his decease as 1727.

Tennent's removal.* The following minute, which has just come to light, contains the only trace of his ministry here that we have been able to discover, in confirmation of Mr. Wetmore's statement:

1728.
17 January.

"Att a Sociaty meeting Aprill ye seventh in ye year of our Lord Christ one thousand seven Hundred and twenty eight then was chose by said Sociaty Vincent Simkins and Richard Holms in order for ye collecting and gathering of ye salary of Mr Henry Baldwin wich is Raised by said sociaty and payable ye seventeenth of January next after ye date here of and only for this year above said collected by them."†

It is not known how long Mr. Baldwin continued in this charge. He died before May, 1740, leaving no issue.‡ His successor was ROBERT STURGEON, a native of Scotland, who is said to have been settled here for twelve years.§ He had been Minister of the church in Wilton, Connecticut, from 1726 to 1732,|| and he probably came to

* The minute cited above intimates that the year for which the salary was due would terminate 17 Jan., 1729. It commenced therefore in 1728.

† The original of this interesting document is in the possession of Mrs. John C. Holmes, who has kindly communicated it to me: thus enabling me to supply another link in the succession of the Bedford ministry.

‡ Baldwin Genealogy.

§ President Stiles' Papers; quoted by Webster, History of the Presbyterian Church in America, p. 492.

|| Contributions to the Eccl. History of Conn., p. 508.

1732.

Bedford directly after leaving that place. On the twenty-fifth day of March, 1736, Jonathan Miller, of Bedford, sold to Robert Sturgeon, clerk, of the same place, ten acres of land in Bedford, for the sum of fifty pounds.*

1743.
12 October.

Sturgeon was followed in 1743 by SAMUEL SACKET, a laborious and successful Minister, whose pastorate continued for ten years. His successor was ELIPHALET BALL, who was installed on the second day of January, 1754, and remained in office fourteen years. After him came SAMUEL MILLS, installed in December, 1769, and released from his charge in May, 1786.

The period covered by these long pastorates, was one of agitation and disorder, both in Church and in State. We shall have space only to glance at the times and the men. SAMUEL SACKET† entered the ministry at the moment when the great religious awakening that accompanied Whitefield's labours had reached its height. He was ordained by the Presbytery of New Brunswick, of which William Tennent and his sons were now the leading spirits. The Presbytery sent him into Westchester County to perform a missionary work, for which he was

* Town Records of Bedford, No. 2, p. 137.

† Born in Newtown, L. I., in 1712. Married Hannah, daughter of Nathanael Hazard, of New York, 6 April, 1732. Ordained by New Brunswick Presbytery, 13 Oct., 1741, and sent to preach in Westchester Co., N. Y., at Crompond—now Yorktown—and Cortland Manor. Installed pastor of Bedford Church, 12 Oct., 1743. Called in 1753 to Hanover or Crompond, where he died 5 June, 1784, aged seventy-two years.

well fitted. He was a man of burning zeal—"one of the most enthusiastic Methodists," an unfriendly witness calls him.* It was the period of the division of the Presbyterian Church—the "schism" of 1741. Sacket took sides with the extreme left—to use a modern phrase—the progressives, the "new lights," as they were then termed. The preaching of these men was earnest, evangelical, but too often bitter and denunciatory. In Connecticut they met with little favour. It was a time of great religious torpor throughout New England. Those who sympathized with the revival, dissatisfied with this pervading apathy, separated, in many cases, from the Consociated churches, and formed distinct congregations. Such a movement had occurred in Bedford, greatly weakening the church, during the early years of Sacket's pastorate. He succeeded in drawing back a number of the Separatists; and the church appears to have enjoyed seasons of religious refreshment under his ministry. But the people were conservative, distrustful of new measures, attached to the "half-way covenant;" the zeal and the strictness of their "New Light" Minister displeased them; and they asked to have the pastoral relation dissolved.

1753.
4 April.

His successor, ELIPHALET BALL,† was a man of

* History of the Prot. Episc. Church in Westchester Co., N. Y., by R. Bolton, p. 621.

† A native of New Haven, Conn. Graduated at Yale College in 1748, and ordained probably by one of the Connecticut Associa-

1754.
2 January.

kindred spirit. Like Sacket, he held with Edwards and Bellamy in his theology, and in his views of experimental religion ; and like Sacket he met with opposition on the part of the " Old Side " members of his congregation. In 1756 he wrote to Bellamy, begging him to come and preach in his parish, and promising to spend a week with him in visiting the regions round about. His " natural turn " led him sometimes into hasty and arbitrary action ; and the help of the Presbytery was repeatedly invoked,* to settle difficulties between the pastor and the Session.† In 1763, " understanding that the Church in Bedford laboured under great Difficulties, as well by the Death of one of their Elders, as from the withdrawing of another, one Mr Daniel Haight, who had turn'd Anabaptist, whereby the Church was left without a proper Number of Elders, and could not be prevailed with at present to chuse any more," the Presbytery ap-

tions. Installed Pastor of Bedford Church, 2 Jan., 1754. Dismissed 21 Dec., 1768. Removed to " the Five Mile Square "—now Ballston, Saratoga County, New York—in 1770. Died there in 1797. He is said to have been distantly related to General Washington.

* Some of these charges are recited by Webster, Hist. of the Presb. Church in America, p. 657 ; but inasmuch as the Presbytery found the complaints to be groundless, they are unworthy of the prominence that has been given to them.

† The Elders representing Bedford Church in the Presbytery of Dutchess County, from the date of the formation of that Presbytery, 27 October, 1762, until the close of Mr. Ball's pastorate, 21 December, 1768, were Ebenezer Miller, John Lawrence, and Joshua Ambler.

pointed a committee to consider the state of things, and make report at their next meeting. In 1764, Mr. Ball and his Elder referred to the Presbytery a case "touching the Interest of some Monies, arising from the sale of some Parsonage Lands, sold before Mr Ball's settlement in this Place," which the Elder refused to pay. In 1766, a petition was offered "by a Number of Persons belonging to the Church and Congregation in Bedford, desiring that the Rev^d Mr Ball, their present Pastor, might be dismissed from his Pastoral Relation to that Church and people; at the same time alledging nothing against Mr Ball's moral Character, only representing that there were some particular uneasinesses existing among them, which rendered the success of his Ministry dubious among that People." Finding, however, that "a Majority of the People were yet for his Continuance, and observing the Christian Tenderness that appeared between the parties," the Presbytery was of opinion that "some healing Measures should yet be pursued to make up their present unhappy Breach," and advised the pastor to call the congregation together to consult and act with reference to their condition. In 1767, a minority of the congregation complained that the Church Session had dismissed two of the Elders from office. The Presbytery judged that "a Church Session had power to purge its own Body," yet advised that this action be reconsidered, and that if it should appear upon the whole to be for the best, the E-

1767.

ders be restored. This course did not satisfy the complainants, who appealed to the Synod. At the next meeting of the Synod of Philadelphia, 27th May, 1767, the complaint was presented by Mr. John Lawrence, Elder: but was dismissed as trivial, and the conduct of the dissatisfied party, "in absenting themselves from public worship, on so slender a foundation," was pronounced unjustifiable. The difficulties which had been pending so long, culminated however in the following year, when the Presbytery met at Bedford. "A Petition was prefer'd by Mr Ball, requesting a Dismission from his pastoral Relation." After duly considering the reasons for and against granting this request, the Presbytery "judged it most for the Glory of God, the Interest of Religion, and best Good of that Church and people that the pastoral Relation be dissolved, and do dissolve it accordingly." Mr. Ball was recommended as a Minister of the Gospel in good standing to the churches wherever God in His providence might call him; and the Presbytery "being sensible of the broken and melancholly Circumstances of the Church and Congregation in this place," did "earnestly recommend to every one of them to forget and forgive all former Broils and Disputes, and unitedly join to seek and pursue the Things which make for Peace."

1768.
21 December.

Our accounts of Eliphalet Ball, after his resignation of this pastoral charge, have hitherto been singularly confused and inaccurate. It has been rep-

resented * that he came back to Bedford in 1772, and resumed the care of this Church, in the absence of Mr. Mills, who had succeeded him in the pastoral office; that he remained here until 1784, and after spending four years in Woodbridge, Connecticut, removed in 1788 with a part of the Bedford congregation to Saratoga County, in this State. The truth is, however, that this removal occurred nearly twenty years earlier, and very soon after Mr. Ball's departure from Bedford; and that he never returned to this Church.† It was in the year 1770 that with his family he went from this region to the locality which became known by his name, as Ball's Town, or Ballston. Here a settlement had been recently commenced by two brothers, Michael and Nicholas McDonald. From these proprietors, Mr. Ball received the appropriation of a tract of four hundred acres of land, as an inducement to come and bring with him a company of his former parishioners. Among the early settlers of Ballston, we find the names of John Holmes, Dr. Elisha Miller, Beriah Palmer, David

1770
to
1797.

* Webster, History of the Presb. Church in America, p. 658.—Gillett, History of the Presb. Church in the U. S., Vol. I., p. 151.—Bolton, History of Westchester Co., N. Y., revised edition, Vol. I., p. 51.

† The impression that he did return may have arisen from a mistaken reading of an entry in the minutes of the Presbytery of Dutchess County, 8 Oct., 1783, when the people of Bedford made representations to the Presbytery regarding "*Mr. Mills'* [not Mr. Ball's] *return to them*;" Mr. Mills having been absent from Bedford since the burning of the Church and parsonage, 2 July, 1779.

1775
to
1797.

Clark, Samuel Wood, Isaac How, John Bell, Uriah Benedict, Nathan Raymond, Stephen and Epenetus White, Nathanael Weed, and others, who probably belonged to this company of emigrants from Bedford.* On the twenty-second day of September, 1775, the inhabitants of Ballston met, and united in a church relation, under the ministry of Mr. Ball, and upon the basis of the standards of the Church of Scotland.† A house of worship was built upon the southwest corner of the Minister's farm, and here he preached for several years. His pastorate, however, had terminated in April, 1783, when he was succeeded by the Reverend Ebenezer Martin. At this period Mr. Ball removed from Ballston—perhaps leaving his family there—and came to Woodbridge, Connecticut, where he officiated as Minister of the Congregational Church in that place from December, 1783, until the year 1790.‡ He then returned to Ballston, and remained there until his death in 1797; but he did not resume the pastoral charge of the Church, although his name appears occasionally as moderator during vacancies in the pastorate. He continued a member of the Presbytery of Dutchess County, although never present at its sessions until

* History of Saratoga County, New York, by N. B. Sylvester, Philadelphia: 1878. Town of Ballston, pp. 246, 250.

† An Historical Sketch of the Presbyterian Church of Ballston Centre, N. Y. By the Pastor, Alex. S. Hoyt, Ballston, N. Y., 1876.

‡ Contributions to the Eccl. History of Conn., p. 514.

May, 1786. In 1776, his absence from the autumn meeting of the Presbytery was excused, in view of "the Circumstances of that part of the Country where Mr Ball Dwells, and the difficulties of the present times." While in Woodbridge, he connected himself with the New Haven Association.

Mr. Ball was a man of indomitable energy, and as a leader both in civil and in ecclesiastical matters was highly esteemed in the community to which he gave his name. His children, like himself, were pronounced patriots, one of his sons serving during the war of the Revolution as a colonel in the army.*

SAMUEL MILLS, the ninth Minister of this church, was the son † of the Reverend Jedidiah Mills, for fifty-seven years pastor of Ripton—now Huntington—Connecticut. He was graduated at Yale College in 1765, and was licensed by Fairfield East Association on the thirty-first of May, 1768. The Presbytery of Dutchess County, upon dissolving

1769.

* Mr. Ball's sons were John, Stephen, and Flamen. His wife's name was Elizabeth. His daughter, Mary, became the wife of General James Gordon. John was a colonel in the army, and was in active service. "He was in the relief party under General Arnold, that marched to the aid of Fort Stanwix." Flamen, the youngest son, was graduated at Yale College in 1787, and became a lawyer in the city of New York, where he died. His son, Flamen, of Cincinnati, formerly law partner of Chief Justice Chase, and United States District Attorney under President Lincoln's administration, is still living, at the age of seventy-two.—*The Ballston Journal*, 1 Oct., 1881.

† "Son to the Revd Mr Mills of Ripton in Connecticut." Records of the Presbytery of Dutchess County, p. 48.

1769.
13 December.

the pastoral relation between Eliphalet Ball and the people of Bedford, advised them to apply for the services of Mr. Mills, who accepted their call, and was duly ordained by the Presbytery, conjointly with a council of the Ministers of Fairfield County. During the first years of Mr. Mill's pastorate, the church appears to have recovered in a measure from the "broken and melancholy" condition in which he had found it. He had been the unanimous choice of the people, and their attachment to him seems to have been unwavering to the last. But the outbreak of the Revolution made it exceedingly difficult for the Ministers of the Gospel, in this exposed region, to pursue their work. The records of the Presbytery, however, show that in spite of these difficulties, the pastor of Bedford Church was present at its sessions with an Elder, almost invariably, for nine successive years—from December, 1769, to November, 1778.* For the next two years and a half, the meetings of that body were interrupted by the war. Meanwhile Mr. Mills had been forced to remove from Bedford temporarily. His removal probably occurred at the time

* The Elders from Bedford Church, who appeared in Presbytery from 1770 to 1778, were Joshua Ambler, Jacob Smith, Ebenezer Miller, John Lawrence, and Stephen Clerk. Of these, the first was the most frequently present. May 9th, 1770, "Mr Ambler, being an Elder in the Church at Bedford, yet living much nearer to Poundridge, his Circumstances being somewhat Critical, and he in Doubt where to join, begs the Advice of the Presbytery; who having consider'd the Matter, advise him, upon the whole, to continue where he is."

when the church and parsonage, together with nearly the whole village of Bedford, were burned by Tarleton's troops, on the night of the second of July, 1779.

1779
to
1784.

In October, 1782, Bedford was reported as "des- titute." For some months prior to the meeting of the Presbytery in October, 1783, Mr. Mills had been preaching to the congregation in "Fredericksburg North Society," now Patterson, Putnam County, New York. This congregation now requested the Presbytery to "set him over them in the work of the Gospel Ministry." The request was opposed by Jacob Smith, "Elder in the church at Bedford, from which Place Mr Mills was Driven by the distressing Circumstances into which they were cast by y^e late war, and from which Church and Congregation he has been compelled to be absent y^e main part of y^e Time for years past;" urging "that Presbytery would not Liberate Mr Mills from his Pastoral Relation to y^e Church in Bedford till they may have opportunity to represent their Case and signify their mind with respect to Mr. Mills's return to them." The Presbytery was greatly embarrassed by these conflicting applications. Three adjourned meet- ings were held before a decision could be reached. At one of these meetings, the people of Bedford were represented by a committee, consisting of James Raymond, Joseph Holmes, and Moses St. John. Finally, at a meeting held on the seventeenth of March, 1784, the Presbytery conclude that "they do not find reasons to advise Mr Mills to return

1789.

to Bedford." The pastoral relation, however, continued for two years longer, until the installation of his successor. He remained at Fredericksburg until 1789, when, his views upon the subject of infant baptism having been changed, he left the Presbyterian Church and avowed himself a Baptist.*

* The change appears to have occurred in the course of the winter of 1788-9. The Presbytery learned, May 6, 1789, that Mr. Mills had "joined the denomination of the Anabaptists since our last session" (16 Oct., 1788). His connection with the Presbytery was severed 14 Oct., 1789. I have been favoured by the Rev. Samuel J. Mills, of Nevada, Iowa—a grandson of Samuel Mills—with some interesting particulars regarding his grandfather, and his descendants. "I have learned from my father, deceased in 1844, that my grandfather became much exercised on the subject of baptism; shut himself up for six weeks in his study; and then at great personal sacrifice announced to his people his change of views, which severed his connection with the church and the Presbytery. It was the greatest trial of his life." He removed, about the year 1797, to "the Genesee country," and settled "in the vicinity of the Wadsworths, at what was then Williamsburg, midway between Mount Morris and Geneseo." He had four sons: Alexander, Lewis Frederick, Philo, and William A. He died near Geneseo, Livingston County, New York, in 1813 (not 1815, as stated in the Yale College Catalogue). "His memory was long cherished" in that locality, for his worth and devoted piety. His widow, a second wife, was a sister of Colonel David Humphreys, one of Washington's aides-de-camp; and after her husband's death, returned to Connecticut. Samuel Mills' youngest son, William A. (born in Bedford, 27 May, 1777), was a man of great enterprise, prominent among the early settlers of Livingston County, and an active member of the Presbyterian Church. A sketch of his life is published in the History of the Early Settlers of that County. His son, Samuel J. Mills, was graduated at Yale College in 1837, was admitted to the bar in Albany, 1841, but engaged in business for some years, and finally devoted himself to the Ministry, and was licensed in 1859 to preach the Gospel.

Up to this time, he had been an active member of the Presbytery, and the records of that body confirm the impression received from traditional accounts, that he was an able and a devoted Minister of the Gospel.

It is indeed not a little remarkable that during this early period in the history of our land, when our Church was in its infancy, and when the number of trained and faithful men in the service of the Gospel was very small, Bedford should have been favoured with the ministrations of such devoted and gifted Ministers of the Word as Morgan, Tennent, Sacket, Ball, and Mills. The humble "meeting-house," the site of which, at the foot of Bates' Hill, was chosen this day two hundred years ago; and the second house of worship, which, some time in the early part of the last century, took its place, resounded with voices as earnest and eloquent and loyal to the truth as were heard in the land. The waves of the great tide of religious life came sweeping again and again over this people, in the days of the Great Awakening. Here Tennent preached in his power—Tennent, the friend and the peer of Whitefield, the founder of the Log College, and the father of those "four gracious sons," of whom Whitefield wrote, and who were destined to shine as lights amid the darkness and destitution of the age. And it is reasonable to believe that the teachings and the lives of these able and godly men must have exerted a powerful and an abiding influence upon this community.

We have but scanty accounts of the state of religion here during the period immediately preceding the Revolution. In the disturbed condition of the country, there was doubtless much to impede the usefulness of the ministry, and to draw the attention of the people away from sacred truths and duties. Tradition, however, testifies to the fact, that religion pure and undefiled was illustrated here by many a consistent Christian character, and that the doctrines of grace, so earnestly proclaimed from the pulpit, were cherished in the hearts of your forefathers, and bore fruit in humble, blameless and useful lives, whose record is on high.

Bedford, during the greater part of the seven years' war of the Revolution, was protected by the proximity of the American forces, and suffered less from incursions of the British troops than did the places west and south of this, in the region known as the Neutral Ground. It was, however, exposed at all times, but especially in the earlier years of the war, to the depredations of the marauding cow boys: and more than once, the flying visits of the enemy brought fire and slaughter to the homes of its people. Upon one of these occasions, the meeting house and nearly every dwelling in the village were burned.* It is supposed that the records of the church, preserved in the minister's house, were destroyed in this conflagration.

^{1779.}
² July.

* Magazine of American History, vol. III., p. 685 (Nov., 1879).

Soon after the close of the war, the congregation undertook to rebuild their sanctuary. A site was chosen, on the hill overlooking the village, about twenty rods west of the spot where the former house of worship had stood. The ground was given by Captain Lewis McDonald.* The

1783.

* To all Christian People to whom these Presents shall come Greeting know ye that I Lewis McDonald formerly of Bedford in Westchester County State of New York but Now a Resident of Long Island for certain Causes me thereunto moving and out of love and affection for the Encouragement of Virtue and the Propagation of the Gospel Do hereby Bequeath and give unto the Presbyterian Society of Bedford in the County and State above said and to their Heirs and Successors forever as long as they shall Remain a Society and as long as they shall stand in Want of a House of Publick Worship or a spot of Ground to Erect a House of Worship thereon ONE half acre of Land situate lying and being in the Township of Bedford in the County and State aforesaid Bounded (as follows Lying on an Eminence above the spot of Ground where the former Meeting House stood) Easterly by the Road that Runs from the Town of Cantito Westerly Northerly and Southerly by my own Land which land was a purchase of John Elliott Reference being had to the Original Conveyance to have and to hold the Above Bequeathed and Given spot of Land with all and singular the Rights and Privileges thereunto Belonging to the above mentioned Society to their Heirs and Successors agreeable to the above Mentioned Terms and Conditions and also I the said Lewis McDonald do for myself my Heirs and Assigns Covenant with the said Society their Heirs and Successors that at and until the En-sealing of these Presents I am well seised of the Premises as a Good Indefeasable Estate in fee Simple and have Good Rights to Dispose of the same in manner and form above written and the same is free from all Incumberances Whatsoever and furthermore I the said Lewis McDonald do by these Presents bind myself my Heirs to Warrant and Defend to the above Covenanted Premises to the said Society their Heirs and Successors Against all Claims

his hearers sat on slabs, supported by two legs at each end, and two in the middle." *

1795.

But the sanctuary, in its forlorn condition, was only a type of the pervading desolation. Everywhere the traces of the long, weary, exhausting struggle were to be seen. Its most disastrous effects appeared, here as elsewhere, in the moral and religious state of the population. Religious worship interrupted for years, education neglected, families broken up, young men called away to the exposure and suffering of military service, and to the demoralizing associations of camp life; all the hardening and depressing influences of war experienced for so long a time:—it is not surprising to find that the work of recuperation in the church, as in society at large, was slow and difficult.

At Bedford, however, this work was undertaken with a promptness and an energy which proved that the interest of the community in its own religious welfare had not died out. The congregation, shortly after the declaration of peace, became incorporated, under the law of the State of New York. The name and style of the ecclesiastical corporation was, The Presbyterian Church and Congregation of Bedford, to be governed in Discipline and Worship according to the Directory of the now established Church of Scotland. The first trustees elected were Zebadiah Mills, Israel Lyon, and Joseph Owen.

1785.

* The Blatchford Memorial, New York, 1871, pp. 22, 25.

The next year, a Minister was called. JOHN DAVENPORT* came of a long line of eminent New England Ministers. His father was the famous James Davenport, one of the most erratic of the "New Light" preachers, the friend of Whitefield, Davies, and the Tennents. John was born on the eleventh day of August, 1752, in Philippi—now Carmel, Putnam County, New York—where his father was settled for a time.†

^{1785.}
18 May.

The Presbytery of Dutchess County met in Bedford, at the request of the congregation, "with a view to the Instalment of the Reverend John Davenport." Solomon Mead, of Salem, at whose ordination, thirty-four years before, the father of the candidate had been present, preached the sermon,

* Born in Philippi, or Carmel, N. Y., 11 Aug., 1752. Graduated at the College of New Jersey in 1769. Ordained by Suffolk Presbytery in 1775. Stated Supply at Southold, L. I., for two years. Settled in Bedford, 18 May, 1786. Resigned 4 May, 1791. Dismissed, 18 Sept., 1793, to the Presbytery of Long Island. Settled, 12 Aug., 1795, in Deerfield, N. J., where he remained for ten years. He afterwards laboured as home missionary in Western New York, and died in Lysander, N. Y., 13 July, 1821, aged sixty-nine years.

† Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, vol. III., p. 89. Dr. Sprague puts Philippi in *New Jersey*. That the place designated was no other than Philippi in *Dutchess County, New York* (now Carmel, Putnam Co., N. Y.), is shown by the records of the neighbouring church of South Salem, Westchester Co., from which it appears that James Davenport was present at the ordination of Solomon Mead, the first pastor of that congregation, 19 May, 1752, and "gave a word of exhortation." I find no evidence that there was any place in New Jersey named Philippi.

on Hebrews, twelfth chapter and first verse. The pastoral relation which still subsisted in name between this church and the Rev. Samuel Mills was now at length dissolved. And the Presbytery then proceeded to install Mr. Davenport as pastor of Bedford Church.

Under Mr. Davenport's leadership, the Session * of this Church engaged vigorously in the work before them—the exercise of discipline, and the endeavour to promote piety and spirituality among the people. Measures were taken for the more frequent and regular administration of the Holy Communion. A monthly prayer meeting was instituted. Quarterly collections for the relief of the poor were appointed. “These regulations show,” as Mr. Heroy has well observed, “that there were many here at that early day who loved the purity of the Church, and were anxious for its greater efficiency for good in the world.” They testify also to the zeal and faithfulness of the pastor—the first Minister of this people after the Revolution.

Mr. Davenport's pastorate ended on the fourth of May, 1791. His successor was ISAAC FOSTER, who remained only a short time. He had been pastor of the Congregational church in West Staf-

1792.
22 March.

* The Elders who represented Bedford Church in Presbytery during Mr. Davenport's ministry, were Jacob Smith, Moses St. John, and Eli Tyler.

from the Ministry by Hartford North Association in 1781.* The seeds of Universalism and infidelity which he sowed in that church produced, it is said, an abundant harvest. Bedford could not tolerate his teachings; he left after two years, and died in 1807.

1795.

Anticipating a fashion of our own times, this Church next called a Minister from across the water. This Minister was the excellent SAMUEL BLATCHFORD, then pastor of a Presbyterian Congregation in Topsham, Devonshire, England. I am strongly tempted to linger here, and speak to you freely of the life and character of this remarkable man. The materials for a full and graphic sketch are abundant, in the memorial volume prepared by one of his descendants, and in the extensive notices of him contained in Dr. Sprague's *Annals of the American Pulpit*. But I forbear, inasmuch as Mr. Blatchford spent only six or eight months in Bedford, supplying this pulpit and that of Poundridge Church on alternate Sabbaths during the fall and winter of the year 1795; and I must proceed to notice the longer pastorates that came after. Mr. Blatchford was called from Bedford in April, 1796, to Greenfield, Connecticut, where he succeeded President Dwight; thence after a year's service he went to Stratfield; and in 1804 he took charge of the Presbyterian churches of Lansingburg and Waterford, New York, and died 17th March, 1828.

* Contributions to the *Eccl. History of Conn.*, p. 504.

He was followed by JOSIAH HENDERSON, a native of Bedford, Massachusetts, whose pastorate, though short, "left a favourable impression upon the church, and a good name among the people."

Mr. Henderson went from this place to Virginia, and ministered for fourteen years to a congregation in Culpepper County. He afterwards took charge of a church in Tisbury, on the island of Martha's Vineyard, where he is still remembered as "a ready, fluent speaker, and a man of rare pulpit gifts, whom the people thronged to hear." He was a physician, as well as a Minister of the Gospel; and while settled in Tisbury, his "medical practice extended over the whole island." His last days were spent in Farmington, Maine.*

1798.
15 November
to
1803.
3 November.

His successor was EBENEZER GRANT, a graduate of Queen's, now Rutgers College. He was ordained to the Gospel Ministry by the Presbytery of New Brunswick, on the nineteenth of November, 1800, at Shrewsbury, New Jersey, and for the next four years supplied the church in that place, and several neighbouring congregations. Mr. Grant came to Bedford in 1804, at the age of thirty-one, and here laboured for seventeen years, fulfilling his course and resting from his work on the sixth day of September, 1821. He was universally be-

1804.
20 September.

* Communicated by Richard I. Pease, Esq., of Edgartown, Mass. Mr. Henderson was married twice. He had several children, one of whom, Jophanus, became a physician. The Elders during Mr. Henderson's pastorate were Moses St. John, Justus Harris, Eli Tyler, Peter Fleming, Joseph Owen, and Stephen Benedict.

1821.

loved, and his removal, in the prime of life, and in the midst of a useful ministry, was greatly deplored throughout this community. He was the first Minister since Thomas Denham, a century and a third before, who died while pastor of this church, and was buried among his people. "His remains lie," says Mr. Heroy, "beneath the green sward under the cliff, where the ground is terraced gradually up to the overhanging rocks."

It was during Mr. Grant's ministry, in the year 1807, that the Bedford Academy was founded. This institution, though not of a denominational character, owed its existence largely to the Presbyterian Church of Bedford, whose pastor was the first president of the Board of Proprietors, and whose trustees gave the land upon which the building was erected.* Its first Principal was the Reverend Daniel Crocker, a Presbyterian clergyman. Governor Jay was one of the original subscribers. Time will not permit me to mention even the more salient names in the long list of those who have been connected with your academy as instructors, and the longer list of those who have pursued their studies within its walls—many of whom have attained distinction as profes-

* "January 19th, 1807. At a meeting of the Presbyterian Society of the Town of Bedford," it was voted that a lot be given, "fifty feet in front and one hundred feet in rear of the west corner of the parsonage meadow, fronting the green, and adjoining Coll. Holly's garden, for the express purpose of building an academy thereon, and to be used for no other purpose whatever."

sional and business men.* The establishment of such a seat of learning, early in the present century—five years before the common school system of this State was adopted—testifies to the intelligence and public spirit of this community. Dr. Dwight, in 1813, made exception in favour of Bedford, and two other localities, when he says of Westchester County, “Neither Learning nor Religion has within my knowledge flourished to any great extent among the inhabitants.” †

1807.

We come now to a period in the history of the church, over which the recollections of not a few of those here present extend, a period the traditions of which indeed are doubtless fresh and clear in the memories of all. And here the historian must descend from his vantage-ground, as one conversant with things remote, beyond the ken of his hearers, to speak with modesty, in the presence of those more familiar than himself with the men and the times that are to pass under review. The sixty years that have elapsed since the death of Ebenezer Grant, in 1821, cover the pastorates of four Ministers of the Gospel, whose names you hold in deserved esteem and reverence:—Jacob Green, David Inglis, David C. Lyon, Peter B. Heroy.

The first of these was the grandson and the namesake of a very remarkable man. JACOB

* History of Bedford Academy, read at the Annual Closing Exercises, June 28, 1877, pp. 1-5.

† Travels in New England, vol. III., p. 490.

GREEN, pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Hanover, in Morris county, New Jersey, from 1745 till his death in 1790, was one of the most influential Ministers of his day. A pronounced patriot, he did good service in his country's cause, from the outbreak of the Revolution. A valiant soldier of Christ, he was successful in winning many souls to his Master. Distressed in view of the religious destitutions of the land, he originated a plan for the speedier preparation of teachers and Ministers to supply those destitutions. The Associated Presbyteries, which accomplished a good work, though in an irregular way, in the closing years of the last century, and the beginning of the present one, grew out of this plan. It is a curious fact, that the grandson and namesake was destined to spend his best years in destroying and burying out of sight the system which his eminent grandfather had created. Jacob Green of Hanover had ten children. One of them was the celebrated Ashbel Green, eighth president of Princeton College. Another son, who remained in Hanover, and followed a farmer's life, was the father of your pastor, who was born in that place in the year 1790, a few weeks after his grandfather's death.

1790.
13 August.

Mr. Green pursued his studies for the ministry at Rutgers College and at the Theological Seminary in Princeton. He was a member of the first class graduated from that institution. After his licensure, he was sent by the Presbytery upon a

mission to the destitute places in the western parts of Virginia and Pennsylvania. On his return, he was appointed to supply a small church at Succasunna Plain, near Morristown. There he remained nearly five years. The congregation had existed for over seventy years, but had long been without a settled ministry. While Mr. Green was with them, they repaired the old church, which until then had had neither ceiling nor plastered walls; and obtained new strength and vitality. At the urgent solicitation of some of his brethren, and particularly of the late Dr. Johnston, of Newburg, Mr. Green came to this region in the spring of 1822, intending to preach in the village of Fishkill. On his way to that place, he was induced to spend a Sabbath in Bedford, where the people were still in deep sorrow over the recent loss of their Minister. He did so: fulfilled his appointment at Fishkill; and, on his return, preached again in Bedford, when to his surprise a call was extended to him to become the pastor.

At the time of Mr. Green's coming, the church numbered one hundred and nine members. The elders were devout and good men, who longed to see a time of greater prosperity. A cordial welcome was given to the new Minister; and soon there were evidences of increased spiritual life among the people. For several years, not a communion season passed without some additions to the membership of the church. From the first, Mr. Green endeavoured to awaken the interest of

1822.
16 April.

1822
to
1848.

the congregation in the cause of foreign missions. This object was engaging the attention of Christians throughout the country as never before; and in connection with the extensive revivals of religion that visited the churches at this period, a missionary spirit manifested itself. Bedford Church partook largely of this spirit; and to the zeal and the unwearied efforts of Mr. Green to produce and to cherish it, this fact is greatly due. Missionary prayer-meetings were held with frequency in different parts of the parish. A "Ladies' Missionary Society," which still exists, was formed in the second year of Mr. Green's pastorate. The contributions of the people for the enterprise of missions were large and generous. For many years, Bedford Church ranked foremost in this region among the supporters of that cause. Mr. Green's own interest in the work led him, not only to acquaint himself with its progress, but also to cultivate a warm personal friendship for many who engaged in its promotion. His home and pulpit were always open to them; and many a returned missionary visited Bedford, quickening the zeal of pastor and people by fresh accounts from the harvest field. In yet another way he accomplished much for this important cause. The parsonage offered a home to more than one young man who was seeking with straitened means to gain an education at the Academy near by. Among the students who thus came under the care and influence of the earnest pastor, was Joseph Owen, a native

of this place, who went from Bedford in 1832 to Princeton, and after completing his studies at the college and the seminary, engaged in the service of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions. Dr. Owen was one of the ablest and most devoted of our missionaries in Northern India. He finished his course after thirty years of fruitful labour, dying at Edinburgh in Scotland, on the fourth day of December, 1870, at the age of fifty-six. I am told that he has been heard to say, that if he was of any use in the world, he had reason to thank Mr. Green for it.

1822
to
1848.

It was during this pastorate—in 1829—that the Presbytery, taking its name from this town, the Presbytery of Bedford, was formed. Though Presbyterian from the beginning, your church had passed under the watch and care of several different ecclesiastical bodies. In the old colony times, before the framing of the Saybrook Platform, the Ministers of Fairfield County had the oversight of the little flock in the remote bounds of Stamford. After the year 1708, the Association of Fairfield County assumed this duty. Under William Tennant's ministry, the church was connected with the Presbytery of Philadelphia. During Robert Sturgeon's pastorate, its relations were with the Presbytery of New York; and during Samuel Sacket's ministry, with the Presbytery of Long Island. But in 1762, a Presbytery was formed, designed to include all the Ministers and churches in this region, and to be known by the

1822
to
1848.

name of Dutchess County Presbytery. Bedford Church came under the care of this new body, and so continued until transferred in 1795 to Hudson Presbytery; from whose jurisdiction it passed in 1819 under that of the Presbytery of North River. Through all the changes it remained Presbyterian. Meanwhile, nearly every other church within these bounds had fallen away from a strictly Presbyterian connection. The Associated Presbytery of Westchester, an organization Congregational rather than Presbyterian, had drawn from the Presbytery of Dutchess County every flock under its care save Bedford, South Salem, Patterson and South East. Bedford, the eldest of these churches, and the strongest, was now the standard-bearer of orthodoxy. Jacob Green, from the time of his coming here, devoted himself to the work of recovering and rebuilding the decayed and almost extinct churches of Westchester and Putnam Counties. These churches were now to be gathered under one ecclesiastical control; and with great propriety the new organization was called, in honour of the foremost and the staunchest representative of Presbyterian doctrine and order in this region, the Presbytery of Bedford.

Our Church was then drifting toward the great catastrophe of the year 1837—the division of the one body into the sections known as Old School and New School. Mr. Green's sympathies were all with the Old School party. If Samuel Sacket, a hundred years before, took sides with the "ex-

treme left," the progressives, the men of new views and new measures, Jacob Green may certainly be classed with the extreme right—the eminently conservative, in doctrine and in practice. "He was known," says one well qualified to speak of him and for him, "as strictly orthodox in his views and perfectly reliable as to his knowledge of church order and discipline. And in those days, when the whole Church"—meaning the Old School body—"was wide awake, in guarding against New School and Hopkinsian errors, he was much consulted, much trusted, and sometimes blamed; and as New Haven divinity was much to be guarded against, I used to think that many were glad to have him placed, as a sort of sentinel of the Church, on the borders of Connecticut." In process of time, however, as the angry passions and the harsh judgments of the period of controversy were moderating, some became restless under a preaching that lost nothing of its polemic character. It was in view of the manifestation of this uneasiness, that Mr. Green resigned his charge. The pastoral relation was dissolved by the Presbytery. It had lasted twenty-six years—longer than any other pastorate in the history of this people.

Mr. Green possessed, and retained to the last, the thorough respect and confidence of this entire community. He was an able and earnest preacher of the Gospel of the Son of God. He was a man of strong faith, pure intentions, and a diligent and blameless life. Fully persuaded in his own mind,

1822
to
1848.

1848.
25 January.

1822
to
1848.

he was not greatly disturbed or easily moved by the differing opinions of others. He was a pattern of punctuality and regularity in his habits. He enjoyed unbroken health until the short illness which closed his life. In his excellent wife, who is still living, he had a faithful and efficient coadjutor: and it is from this aged lady that I have learned the particulars with which I close this notice of your old pastor. Mr. Green removed from Bedford to Sing Sing, having received an appointment to the office of chaplain in the State prison. He died on the twenty-fifth day of October, 1851, from typhus fever, taken while visiting a sick person. Two or three days before his death, he called his wife to his bedside, and said to her, "You know that I am not superstitious; but I have had such wonderful views, that I felt that I must tell you." Then raising his eyes as if looking toward some distant scene, he proceeded to say, "Oh, such brightness! it is wonderful! wonderful!" These words he repeated several times, with solemn energy; and then closing his eyes, and letting his hands drop, he said, in a natural, conversational tone, but with great solemnity: "Bow, and tremble, and adore."

Mr. Green's successor was DAVID INGLIS, a young man, twenty-four years of age. He was the son of a well-known and highly esteemed Minister in the south of Scotland, where for more than thirty years the father was pastor of a United Presbyterian congregation. David from his boyhood

cherished the hope of entering the holy ministry. He pursued his studies at the University of Edinburgh, and was licensed to preach when in his twentieth year. Very soon afterwards he came to America, whither, while yet a student, he had looked as the desired field of his life's labours. He travelled for a short time in the West ; and then after supplying a church on Washington Heights, New York, for a few months, he was ordained and installed as pastor of this congregation. Dr. Ormiston, in a notice of him, observes with truth, " His brief ministry of four years " in Bedford " was as grateful to himself as it was delightful to his people, and the memory of the youthful Scottish preacher, so fervid and so faithful, is still fresh and fragrant in that neighbourhood." He was a man, says one of his friends in this place, most cordial in manner and expression. " His kindly greeting and hearty grasp of the hand, his fluent and cheerful conversation, put every one at his ease in his presence. But though so genial and sometimes mirthful in his intercourse with friends, in the pulpit he was intensely earnest and impressive. His preaching was in demonstration of the spirit and of power. It might be said truly of him, if of any man, Christ and His cross was all his theme. Seldom if ever did he close his sermon without a pressing exhortation to the unconverted to come to Christ and be saved. Multitudes far and near were attracted to his preaching: the church was filled Sabbath after Sabbath with attentive listeners ; numbers

1848.
25 October.

were brought into the fold, of such as will be stars in his crown of rejoicing in the great day."

1852.
June.

Of the subsequent career of this devoted servant of God, I shall only remind you briefly. Called from this church to the pastorate of a congregation in Montreal, he had scarcely commenced his labours there, when an overwhelming affliction desolated his home. In one short week his wife and three little children were taken from him. His health seriously affected by grief under this great loss, he was led to accept a call to another field of labour. For seventeen years he was the busy and successful pastor of a church in Hamilton, Canada. In 1871 he was chosen to the chair of Systematic Theology in Knox College, Toronto, but in the following year he resigned that position to become pastor of the Church on the Heights, in Brooklyn. In the midst of the work he loved, and in the prime of his powers, he was stricken down, and died after a brief illness, on the fifteenth day of December, 1877.

Dr. Inglis was "a man of high natural endowments; a scholar of varied and extensive attainments; a Christian of strong convictions and profound experience; a preacher of eminent ability and great acceptance; a pastor of rare wisdom and tender sympathy; a theologian of decided views and large charity; a citizen of generous spirit and unswerving loyalty; a friend of unwavering steadfastness and loving forbearance." Nowhere, I am assured, will these felicitous words of

Dr. Ormiston find a readier response than in the hearts of the people of this his first charge.

Soon after the close of this pastorate a second Presbyterian Church was organized within the limits of this town, at Mount Kisco, where a thriving village had sprung up, on the line of the Harlem Railroad. Seventeen members of this church* were dismissed to form the new colony; and a house of worship was erected in the course of the same year. The enterprise has long since proved to be one of assured success; and to-day the daughter is not far behind the mother church in strength and activity. The Ministers of Mount Kisco Church have been: The Rev. Andrew Shiland, who was installed 14 June, 1854, and resigned in April, 1870; the Rev. John Hancock, installed 16 Oct., 1870, resigned 1 Sept., 1876; the Rev. John H. Frazee, installed 20th June, 1877, resigned 1st Nov., 1879; and the Rev. James W. Johnston, present incumbent, installed 29th June, 1880.

1852.
15 June.

Your next pastor was DAVID C. LYON, installed on the first day of December, 1852, and released from office in May, 1857. With the exception of this brief term of four years and a half, Mr. Lyon's ministerial life has been spent in the West, and chiefly in connection with the work of Home Mis-

* These were Whiting Raymond, Lucretia Raymond, Holly Benedict, Deborah Benedict, Edward Banks, Clarissa Banks, Edward Banks, jr., Samuel Knapp, Elizabeth Knapp, Phoebe Haight, Jesse Barrett, Margaret A. Barrett, Nancy Lounsbery, Emeline Benedict, Elizabeth Merritt, Mary A. Sarles, Jeremiah Banks.

1852
to
1857.

sions. Coming to you fresh from that work, to which he afterwards returned, he was while here the earnest advocate of the cause he loved; losing no opportunity to press its claims, and the claims of other benevolent objects as well, upon the sympathy and liberality of God's people. He was also a devoted pastor, and an able Minister of the Word. For many years the Synodical Missionary of the Synod of Minnesota, Mr. Lyon has been one of the most laborious and useful servants of the church, and Bedford may well cherish the memory of his sojourn here.

The roll of your Ministers, preceding the present pastor, closes with the name of PETER BADEAU HEROY. He was of Huguenot descent, and was born on the sixteenth day of July, 1815, in the neighbourhood of Red Mills, or Mahopac Falls, in Putnam County in this State. His ancestors, driven by persecution to England, from their home on the island of Ré, near Rochelle, in France, found their way across the ocean, about the middle of the last century, to New Rochelle in this county, and a little while before the Revolution removed to the place then known as Red Mills. Mr. Heroy pursued his academic studies at La Fayette College, and obtained his preparation for the ministry at Princeton Seminary. Before his settlement here, he had been settled in Delhi, Delaware County, and in Highlands, Orange County, New York. His ministry here lasted for twenty-one years. He was installed pastor of this

church on the twenty-ninth day of October, 1857, and continued in office until his death, on the sixteenth day of October, 1878. The Synod of New York, in session at the time of his decease, gave expression to the high esteem and cordial affection in which he was held by its members. His unaffected piety, his zeal for the purity of the church, his deep concern for the salvation of souls, his fidelity as a preacher of the Gospel, his kindness and gentleness toward all men, and especially his warm sympathy for the suffering and the troubled, justly endeared him to this people. The grief of an affectionate flock for a Minister whom they trusted and loved, is yet fresh, and is felt amid the festivities of this celebration.

1857
to
1878.

A third Presbyterian Church was organized within the bounds of this town, during Mr. Heroy's pastorate, at Katonah, a station of the Harlem Railroad. The Reverend John H. Eastman, the first and present pastor of Katonah Church, was ordained and installed by the Presbytery of Westchester, on the eighth day of July, 1875.

1872.
17 November.

Mr. Heroy's pastorate was illustrated by an event which would be memorable in the history of any congregation and community: the building of a house of worship, the free will offering of individual piety and benevolence. Descended from that Ephraim Palmer, who was of Greenwich, in 1672, and was admitted an inhabitant of this town in January, 1702, the generous giver of this beautiful sanctuary was prompted by a natural love for

the home of his fathers and the place of his birth, as well as by a noble zeal for the honour of religion. The formal presentation of this building to the Trustees of the congregation, on the day of the dedication, was accompanied with these words from the donor :

1872.
15 August.

“CHRISTIAN BRETHERN: This house of worship, now completed, has been erected for your use as the Presbyterian Church of the village of Bedford, Westchester County, New York; and my wife and myself desire formally to present it to you, with the following statement and conditions :

“ We have had no desire, in this undertaking, to have our names inscribed in your place of worship, but have been actuated by gratitude to Almighty God for the blessings He has conferred upon us, and especially for His exceeding grace in giving us the hope of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ the Lord, our Saviour.

“ We do not feel that we can make any recompence to God for His mercy, but, constrained by His love, we desire to honour and serve Him.

“ Another motive influencing us has been our interest in this community, in the midst of which we have had our summer home for many years, and in this church as a Christian congregation with whom we have been privileged so often to worship.

“ This, as you know, is the place of my birth and the home of my kindred, and with the services of this church my earliest religious impressions are associated.

“ We desire to testify our sympathy, and to aid in the work of the Master here, of helping to maintain His service, and in bringing souls to Christ.

1872.

“ In the conception and prosecution of this enterprise, my wife has been intimately associated with me—indeed, it has been with her a cherished wish for years ; and with this, as so much else of my life, she has been, under God, an inspiration of good.

“ The best artists, workmen, and materials have been employed in the construction and furnishing of this building, and I do not know of anything which remains to be added to render it ready for use. I have used every exertion to make it suitable and convenient for your purposes, religious and social, as a church and congregation.

“ And now, in presenting to you this house of worship, we desire to submit the following conditions, upon which, we understand, our views are in harmony :

“ 1st. The church is to be a free church, as this phrase is generally accepted ; the pews are to be free, so that all who choose to come to worship God here will feel at liberty to do so. The current expenses of the church and congregation to be met by subscription on the part of those interested in its maintenance, or by any plan of systematic contribution the congregation may deem proper to adopt.

“ 2d. The congregation obligates itself to keep the property in good and necessary repair, and to preserve and perpetuate in it religious services.

1872.

“Your acceptance of the property will be understood as the acceptance also of the conditions before expressed.

“Thankful for the ability to make the offering, we now, through this letter, make over to you, the Bedford Presbyterian Church and Society, all our interest and right in the building we have erected, praying also that the Master will mercifully accept and grant that in it His people may be comforted and strengthened, and many souls ‘added to the church daily of such as shall be saved.’ ”

For eight years and more you have possessed and enjoyed this pleasant sanctuary, and the high purpose of the giver has been attained so far, in the comfort and convenience of the worshipping people, in the orderly ministration of Divine service, in the attraction of some, we may hope, not only to the courts of the Lord’s house, but also to Him who is the glory of the house. And yet, on this occasion, and in this sacred building, I am tempted to say of our honoured friend,

“He builded better than he knew.”

There was needed, against this day, completing two centuries since the order was given for the location of the first house of worship erected here, there was needed a monument, a suitable and an abiding memorial. Our friend has anticipated the need.

Si monumentum requiris, circumspice.

This church, the gift of FRANCIS ASBURY PALMER and SUSANNA PALMER, his wife, is the fourth edifice occupied by the Presbyterian congregation of Bedford.* The first, erected about the year 1681, was situated, as we have seen, on the town common, at the foot of the hill known as Bates's hill. It was called the "Meeting-house," your Puritan forefathers choosing to reserve the word church, according to New Testament usage, for the body of believers, the spiritual church. The Meeting-House was used not only for the Sabbath and other religious services, but also for the town assemblies; though as early as the year 1702 we read of a Town House, in which the town meetings were held, and which being occupied in part at least as a dwelling, may have been a distinct building. In process of time, doubtless, it was enlarged, to accommodate the growing population of the town. The second house of worship, built probably in the early part of the last century, stood at the foot of the hill upon the summit of which the third church—lately abandoned for the present one—was erected after the Revolution. This edifice—the fourth—has

* The present pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Bedford, the Reverend JAMES HOWARD HOYT, is a native of Milton, Saratoga County, New York. He was graduated in 1873 at Union College, and in 1876 at Union Theological Seminary, New York. He was licensed by the Presbytery of New York, and ordained by the Classis of Westchester, 27 June, 1876, and at the same time was installed pastor of the Reformed Church at Greenburg, Westchester Co., N. Y. He was installed pastor of this Church, 17 Jan., 1880.

been placed upon a part of the ground laid out, it is believed, at the beginning of the settlement, for the use of the ministry.* Situated here in the centre of your beautiful village, on the broad street which public taste and enterprise have cared for so judiciously—may it stand until a third century shall end; and may the glory of this house be greater than of any of the former three!

As we began, so let us close, devoutly acknowledging the goodness and wisdom of the Divine Providence, as viewed in the history of this community and of this people. Among the towns of our County, Bedford has been singularly favoured in many ways; and first, in the composition of its original settlement. A recent English writer has called attention to the superior character of the founders of the colony of Massachusetts Bay, as differing from the earlier settlers in Maryland or Virginia, and even from those who ventured across the Atlantic in the *Mayflower*. They were men of substance; most of them of the middle class in England, and they left its shores, not under pressure of want, or because tired of their country, but driven by unbearable persecution to this wilderness; men “who

* “1694. The town by vote doth agree that as much land and meadow as can be spared and not predigious [prejudicial] to highways y^t lyeth on the norwest side of whipping post broock shall be kept for a minestar and to be disposed to no man els but to a minister.”—“Whipping Post Brook” is believed to be the stream running in the rear of the present parsonage grounds.

were as truly and loyally English as any that ever heard the lark carol."* These were the men whose sons planted this town. And in tracing the history of this town and church for two centuries, I have been led to think that the character given to this community by its founders, has been lasting; that the institutions of morality and religion, that were ordered and settled by their endeavours upon the best and surest foundations, have continued through these succeeding generations; and that hence peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, have so greatly flourished here.

I remark, secondly, that Bedford has been favoured in the preservation of its territory. Through early changes in the colonial government, through subsequent proprietary disputes, and through the more recent geographical arrangements by which, after the Revolution, our County was unwisely cut up into a number of petty townships, your town has remained intact, and still, after two centuries, lies four-square, very much as obtained by early purchases from the savages, and as described in its first charter from the government of Connecticut in 1697.

I mention as a third advantage the fact that Bedford has been exceptionally free, for these two centuries, from religious contentions. For the first hundred years, Presbyterianism occupied the

* Alfred Rimmer, in "Belgravia,"

ground almost exclusively.* And during the second hundred years, in which other Christian denominations have taken part in the common work, there has been a remarkable harmony between those of differing views and practices. For this harmony, I cannot but think you have been greatly indebted to the personal influence of that eminent man, whose name, second only to that of Washington in our national history, is pleasantly associated with this spot; coming, as he did, in the beginning of the present century to make the home of his honoured old age in Bedford. JOHN JAY was a devoted son of the Protestant Episcopal Church. But he was none the less a lover of true religion as represented in other branches of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Finding, on his removal to Bedford, no Episcopal church in the vicinity, he constantly attended," says his distinguished son and biographer, "the one belonging to the Presbyterians; nor did he scruple to

* In 1725, Mr. Wetmore reported "at Bedford about eight or ten families of the Church"—*i. e.*, the Church of England. The Anglican missionaries at Rye officiated occasionally or statedly—once in two or three months—at Bedford, until the period of the Revolution, and sometimes reported a large attendance upon the services. Where these services were held we do not learn. In 1762, "there appears to have been several families, professors of the Church of Englan . ." (Bolton, History of the Prot. Episc. Church in Westchester Co., page 623.) The rest of the "four hundred families belonging to the cure" were Presbyterians. There was no resident Minister of the Church of England in Bedford before the Revolution; nor do we find mention of any house of worship prior to the erection of St. Matthew's Church in 1807.

unite with his fellow-christians of that persuasion in commemorating the passion of their common Lord." His interest in the welfare of the various evangelical denominations did not cease, when in 1807, through his instrumentality, St. Matthew's Church was erected. To the last "he rejoiced in the increase and prosperity of them all." *

The pastors of this congregation found in him a kind and wise friend. His spirit has rested upon those who have come after him, and has been largely diffused throughout this community; and to-day the pleasure of your celebration is marred by no remembrance of sectarian feuds in the past, no consciousness of sectarian rancours cherished in the present. So may it be unto the latest generations! †

* The Life of John Jay. By his son, William Jay. New York: 1833, Vol. I., pp. 434, 461.

† Among the communications read by the Pastor of this Church, upon the occasion of the Bi-centenary Celebration, 22 March, 1881, was a letter from the Honorable John Jay, of which we are permitted to quote the following sentences. Alluding to "the good feeling between the two parishes" in Bedford, Mr. Jay remarks: "I well remember that as a boy on each third Sunday, when our Episcopal pastor, the late Reverend Samuel Nichols, D.D., officiated at North Salem, I accompanied my father and his family to the Presbyterian Church at Bedford, where I am told that to the last our pew continued to be known as 'The Governor's Pew.' I may perhaps add too without impropriety, as entitling me to a personal interest in this occasion, that when I first attended Mr. Holmes' Academy, I had the good fortune to live in the family of your predecessor the Reverend Jacob Green, and his excellent wife, of whose kindness I retain the most pleasant recollections."

As I bring this address to an end, I feel how vain after all is the attempt to live over and to picture the events of the past. In the strongest light that history can cast upon them, they stand forth, clear, it may be, well defined, but colourless and still. As masses of foliage outlined against the sky, when the sun has set, the shapes are there, but how inanimate and how far away! We live only in the present; and only the interests of the present can be revealed in living freshness and correct perspective. Yet is it well sometimes to sit as in the twilight, and watch the scenes over which the shadows of evening are stretched out, and take in the suggestions of the thoughtful hour. While reviewing the past, recounting its mercies, and seeking to gather up its lessons; while recognizing the blessings and the obligations of the present, it is our privilege to look forward into the future, as men that watch for the morning—to look toward the great consummation, for which these centuries of Christian work have been preparing; for which the holy men of old have been labouring; for which the generations of godly people who have gone before us have been praying and waiting. “When told one day in his old age that some of his friends had asked how it was possible for him to occupy his mind at Bedford, Jay replied with a smile, ‘I have a long life to look back upon, and an eternity to look forward to.’” In that kingdom of God whose dawn we are permitted to behold; in that city which lieth four-square, there await us the faithful

Ministers, the humble believers, the patient sufferers, the witnesses for Christ, who have gone before us. Let it be our care to follow them as they followed Him. Let it be our joy to remember, that though the workmen die, the work goes on!

MINISTERS OF BEDFORD CHURCH.

Rev. Thomas Denham,	1684-1689.	Died	1689.
“ Joseph Morgan,	1699-1702.	Died after	1740.
“ John Jones,	1702-1705.	Died	1719.
“ William Tennent,	1720-1727.	Died	1745.
“ Henry Baldwin,	1728.	Died bef.	1740.
“ Robert Sturgeon,	1732-1743.	Died after	1750.
“ Samuel Sacket,	1743-1753.	Died	1784.
“ Eliphalet Ball,	1754-1768.	Died	1797.
“ Samuel Mills,	1769-1786.	Died	1813.
“ John Davenport,	1786-1791.	Died	1821.
“ Isaac Foster,	1792-1794.	Died	1807.
“ Samuel Blatchford,	1795.	Died	1828.
“ Josiah Henderson,	1798-1803.	Died after	1822.
“ Ebenezer Grant,	1804-1821.	Died	1821.
“ Jacob Green,	1822-1848.	Died	1851.
“ David Inglis,	1848-1852.	Died	1877.
“ David C. Lyon,	1852-1857.		
“ Peter B. Heroy,	1857-1878.	Died	1878.
“ James H. Hoyt,	1880.		

RULING ELDERS OF BEDFORD CHURCH,

SINCE THE ORGANIZATION OF THE PRESBYTERY OF DUTCHESS
COUNTY, IN 1762.

1763. Ebenezer Miller.
1765. John Lawrence.
1768. Joshua Ambler.
1772. Jacob Smith.
1775. Stephen Clerk.
1784. Alexander Kidd.
1786. Moses St. John, ordained 5 Nov. Died 8 April, 1822,
1789. Eli Tyler, ordained 13 Dec. Died 10 Oct., 1828.
1789. Justus Harris, ordained 13 Dec.
1791. Simeon Rider.
1800. Peter Fleming. Died 31 Jan., 1823.
1800. Joseph Owen.
1800. Stephen Benedict.
1815. Aaron Read, ordained 19 Mar. Died 9 Sept., 1854.
1815. Seth Lyon, ordained 19 Mar. Died 31 Jan., 1878.
1820. Elias Hait, ordained — Oct.
1825. Joseph Silliman, ordained 11 Sept. Died 28 Sept., 1829.
1825. John Clark, ordained 11 Sept. Died 30 Aug, 1863.
1835. David Miller, ordained 2 Jan. Died 14 May, 1858.
1850. Alvah Howe, ordained — April. Died 3 Oct., 1874.
1850. Phineas Lounsbery, ordained April. Died 26 Dec., 1878.
1865. Edward Raymond, ordained 5 Nov. Died 7 Mar., 1873.
1865. Solomon R. Lyon, ordained 5 Nov. Died 19 Mar., 1868.
1865. John G. Clark, ordained 5 Nov.
1865. St. John Owen, inducted 5 Nov.
1875. Daniel B. Finch, ordained 28 Feb.
1875. James H. Trowbridge, ordained 28 Feb.

1875. David Travis, ordained 28 Feb.

1875. Albert Williamson, ordained 28 Feb.

. The early records of the Church having disappeared—destroyed, it is supposed, by fire, in 1779—no list of Elders can be given for the period prior to the organization of the Presbytery of Dutchess County. The first six names in the above list are taken from the records of that Presbytery: and the dates prefixed to them indicate the years in which the Elders named first appeared in Presbytery as delegates from Bedford Church.

ACCOUNT OF THE PROCEEDINGS
AT THE
BI-CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY
OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BEDFORD, N. Y.

THE services were held in the Church, at half-past one o'clock in the afternoon, and at seven o'clock in the evening, of Tuesday, the twenty-second day of March, 1881. The building was tastefully decorated, and on either side of the pulpit the names of the successive Ministers of the parish were inscribed. A large congregation, including many persons who had come from distant parts of the county, participated in the celebration. The service of song was conducted by a large and well-trained choir.

The afternoon service was opened with the Anthem, *Benedic anima mea.*

The Prayer of Invocation was then offered by the Pastor, and the Reverend C. W. Adams, D.D., read a portion of Holy Scripture.

The following Address was made by the Reverend Samuel Irenæus Prime, D.D. :

It is with peculiar enjoyment, although at some sacrifice of feeling, that I have come to be with you. A train of most interesting associations is awakened by the occasion, and it is only because for a single hour in the course of these two hundred years my history touched yours, that I have been invited to participate in these services. It is now nearly fifty years since I preached my first sermon in the Bedford Presbyterian Church.

In the autumn of the year 1833, I was licensed to preach the Gospel by the Presbytery of Bedford, then in session.

Among the Ministers of the Presbytery at that time was the Rev. Jacob Green, who was your Pastor from 1822 to 1848.

Before we separated he was kind enough to ask me to come to Bedford and preach the same sermon on the next Sabbath day. The same sermon was the only sermon that I had, and therefore it must be that sermon or none.

It was the more encouraging and comforting to me to receive this invitation from Mr. Green, because he was estimated to be one of the ablest, soundest, and most learned men of the Presbytery. Mr. Green was intensely orthodox. He was the nephew of Dr. Ashbel Green, a very distinguished champion of orthodoxy in the Presbyterian Church, and formerly the President of Princeton College—one of the master minds in the Church; and it was pleasantly remarked of Jacob Green that he inherited from his uncle the legacy of orthodoxy, and felt religiously bound to “defend the trust;” and he was abundantly able to do it.

He had all the tenacity of the soundest and ablest divines of that day, and of any day, and he was ready to “fight the fight” and to “keep the faith.” When you bear in mind that Mr. Green did not ask me to come and preach

until he first heard the sermon, you will admire his courage as well as his kindness, while you will see that I had the more reason to be gratified. The sermon was the fruit of more labour, prayer, and care than any discourse I have ever prepared since.

The text was not of my own choosing, but it was assigned to me by the Presbytery, and yet it was one of a class of passages which of all in the Bible I would have preferred, had the selection been left to me ; but I thought it then, and still think it, one of the most comprehensive texts in the word of God to men, and I count it no small pleasure to be able to say, that when one of your members met me at the station this morning, and asked me to ride up here, he told me that he remembered hearing me preach, and he told me what the text was. Now I would like to know how many of you remember the text of a sermon that you heard forty years ago ?

The text has an extent and depth of meaning that no human mind can grasp, and it contains all that men may need to know and believe in order to inherit eternal life.

I have that sermon in my hand. If you will' bear with me for an hour or two I will read it to you. . . . But I do not perceive any encouraging response, and therefore I will content myself with simply saying that it is marked in the corner " No. 1., Bedford, New York, Oct. 6th, 1833," and it has been lying in my study ever since. And if my health should be spared two years and a half longer it would give me great pleasure if you will give me the use of this church to come here and preach a sermon, the theme of which shall be " The past fifty years of the Presbyterian Church." I shall be glad to make such a review and make it on the spot where I began my ministry of the word of God. I remember that a criticism was made in the Presby-

tery on the sermon by one of the members, who said, "The young man has tried to get the whole plan of salvation into the sermon, and has left nothing for him to say afterwards." The first sentence of the sermon is the whole Gospel plan of salvation.

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life."

And I have tried since never to preach a sermon without getting so much of the Gospel into it as to enable one who heard it to be saved thereby if he would. And that I think ought to be the desire of every man who undertakes to preach the word. And if I had another fifty years of preaching to do, beginning again with this text, I would preach "Christ and him crucified." Christ lifted up for men. And I would keep right on with that one great truth, in all its fulness and power, preaching it to the young and old, the learned and the unlearned, the rich and the poor; the "great salvation" the "same yesterday, to-day and forever." Other men preach philosophy; I will preach the Gospel. Other men may preach morality; I will tell of salvation by faith in Christ. Others may tell the world that all men will finally be saved; but I will say that "whosoever believeth in Christ shall not perish but have eternal life"—and they shall perish if they do not believe.

This is not the same house in which I, a beardless boy, less than twenty-one years old, began my services in the ministry. I congratulate you on this beautiful sanctuary in which you celebrate your two hundredth anniversary. I honour and thank him to whose munificence you owe this beautiful structure, and I pray God that while in circumstances of so much encouragement and enjoyment you gather in these courts to hold this anniversary, you may be-

gin a new era in the service of God. I pray that you may to-day consecrate yourselves, your children, your property anew to the service of Christ, and that generations yet unborn may here gather and celebrate that great sacrifice which God Himself made when He gave His Son for your salvation."

I pray that this pulpit may never give forth any uncertain sound in regard to the truths of the Christian religion; that here the honour of God may be sought in the promotion of His word, and that it may be said hereafter, as it has been said of the former house and of the various churches which have existed here, that this and that man, yea, that many were born here into the kingdom of God.

Let us pray.

"Almighty and most merciful God, our Father who art in Heaven, we thank Thee for the great privilege we enjoy of coming together in the courts of Thy house this day to record with gratitude all Thy blessings toward us, to rehearse the history of the past, to strengthen our hearts and minds by reviewing the dealings of God's love toward us and toward our fathers before us from generation to generation. We thank Thee that Thou hast here established a church, that in its infancy and through all the years of its history Thou hast been with it. We bless Thee for this long line of faithful men who have here preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ in sincerity and power. We thank Thee for a godly ancestry. We thank Thee for the institutions of religion, for all the means of grace which we enjoy; and for the power which this church has exerted upon this community. And we pray that Thou wouldst continue to be with this church and people. May Thy servant, the present Pastor, derive strength from Thee, and may he go

forward in the great work to which he is called, and may his labors be crowned with abundant success.

“We pray for the Elders, that they may be men fearing God and rejoicing in the truth.

“We pray for the children of this church, that they may all be brought up in the fear of God, and learn the way of righteousness. And we beseech Thee, O God, that for ages to come this nation may be that happy people whose God is the Lord, erecting institutions of religion, preserving the truth in its purity, and rejoicing in the service of God; and may Thy blessing come down upon the Church of Christ universal. Revive religion throughout our country; fill all our churches with the glory of Thy grace, and may this people consecrate itself to Thee, that from our land may go forth into all lands the light of civil and of religious liberty and the glorious light of the Gospel of Thy Son until all the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Be with us in all the services that are before us. Clothe with power Thy servants who shall now address us in regard to the times that are past, and tell the way in which the Lord hath led this people; and may all who speak to us to-day and this evening have help from on high, that this may be a great and good occasion, long to be remembered by those who are present.

“Hear us in these our prayers. Graciously answer and bless us, and finally save us all in that temple where we shall forever sing Thy praise, through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Redeemer. Amen.”

The first hymn, “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty,” was then sung; and the Historical Discourse was delivered by Rev. Charles W. Baird, D.D. (See preceding pages.)

The discourse was followed by the singing of the hymn
“Nearer, my God, to Thee.”

ADDRESS

BY THE

REV. WILSON PHRANER, D.D.,

Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Sing Sing, N. Y.

I HAVE always been accustomed to hear Bedford spoken of as a very retired and quiet country town. So far as my own personal knowledge and observation go, however, it would seem to be one of the liveliest and most enterprising of places; for whenever it has been my good fortune to be here there has always been some great event on hand—such as the laying of a corner-stone, or the dedication of a church, or the installation of a pastor. To-day we have the most unique and peculiar occasion of all, and one which seems most appropriately to have stirred the whole town from centre to circumference—namely, the celebration of the bi-centennial of this Christian church—a grand occasion indeed, and one upon which I am glad to be with you, and in the public services of which I count it an honour and a privilege to participate.

As I was listening to the admirable historical address of Dr. Baird, it occurred to me that there was perhaps a special propriety in my being present here to-day. This is not the first bi-centennial celebration which I have attended. Nineteen years ago, in the year 1862, it was my privilege to be present at a service similar to this in the dear old church of Jamaica, L. I., to which your historian has made reference—the church in which I was born and with which I united in my childhood, and which

claims the proud distinction of being the oldest Presbyterian church in the United States. I cannot but recall to-day those former bi-centennial services in which I took part as a son of the church, one of the thirteen who had gone forth from that congregation into the Christian ministry. My special mission here to-day is to bear to you, my brethren, the cordial salutations and sincere and heartfelt congratulations of the Presbytery of Westchester, with which this church is connected. But before proceeding to speak as a representative of Presbytery, may I not extend to you the congratulations of the grand old Presbyterian church of Jamaica—that mother of churches and that fountain of supply for the Christian ministry. I am sure I shall be authorized and justified by that church in speaking in her behalf, and not only in conveying to you her salutations, but also in welcoming you to a share in the honour and distinction of being among the very earliest organized Presbyterian churches in the land.

If you will indulge me, I will make another personal allusion just here. I was touched by the reference of your historian to the last four Pastors who have occupied this pulpit—Green, Inglis, Lyon, Heroy—I knew them all. When, thirty years ago, I went to Sing Sing to enter upon my work there, I found the excellent Jacob Green and his wife in my congregation at Sing Sing, and received from them a very kind and cordial welcome, and though it was but a short time previous to his death, yet I learned greatly to respect and love him before he was called hence. It was my privilege to be with him in his last sickness, and to hear from his lips those very words which Dr. Baird has just quoted in connection with that wonderful vision, or revelation as he called it, of the future. It was mine to close his eyes in death, and to attend his funeral services

at the church on the morning of the very day on which I was there installed Pastor, in the afternoon. His body was the first interred in our new cemetery, which was thus consecrated by being made the resting-place of the dust of so devout and excellent a man. Never shall I forget the impressive address of Dr. Spring as we stood around the open grave, and with that voice of unequalled beauty and power, he gave utterance to these words: "One goeth and another cometh." That dear old man finished his ministry just as I was about to enter upon mine, and thus has it ever been, "one goeth and another cometh." The time for individual labour and service is short—but, blessed be God, "though the workmen die, yet the work goes on;" when one lays down the armour another takes it up.

But I have, as I have said, a special errand here to-day, and that is to bear to you the congratulations of the Presbytery with which you are connected. We have little perhaps to be proud of in our churches, but we have at least this distinction, of having a church which has completed two hundred years of its history. In that history we rejoice with you to-day. We hail you as the "very ewel and crown of our Presbytery. We heartily congratulate you upon the distinction whereunto you have attained, and we come with gratitude and thankfulness to unite with you in the special and interesting services of this occasion.

As I have been sitting here I have been thinking of the dignity and value of a Christian church—God's own ordinance. With all its imperfections, it is about the grandest thing in this poor sinful world of ours. A Christian church two hundred years old! Just think of it! Why, this church is the only living organization, yea, it is the only living thing, in this whole town of Bedford, which

has reached such an age. A tree or an edifice two hundred years old would have some interest for us, especially in this new country of ours; we would turn aside to see it, and would look upon it with reverence. How much more, then, should we come up hither to celebrate the bi-centennial of this church of Jesus Christ! Two hundred years of history, two hundred years of Christian experience and of Christian testimony, two hundred years of faith, two hundred years of prayer, two hundred years of instruction and of witness-bearing for God and His blessed Gospel! No insignificant matter this. True, we have no means by which we can accurately measure the influence of this church in all these passing years, and yet we feel sure that that influence has been great for good, and for the enriching and blessing of this whole people. May I not assume that this church has been a leading element or factor in shaping and determining the character of this community? Suppose you could destroy to-day the aggregate influence of the Christian church for these two hundred years, and what desolation would be evident! Take out of your individual life the healthful and helping influences which come to you by your relations to and association with the church of Christ, the influence of her instruction, of her worship, of her social gatherings, her prayers, her sacred communion and fellowship—take out of your life and mine, I say, all these, and what would there be left to make life worth the having? You will agree with me, I am sure, when I say that the richest and purest joys of our life are those which we find in connection with the sacred and precious hours which we spend in the sanctuary of God, and in our association with His people. And so the influence and power of this church have been no mean factors in the education and

instruction of this people, contributing largely to make them what they are, and to lift them to that position of honour and excellence in which they rejoice to-day ; and thus, also, as to its influence, not only for instruction, but for comfort and for consolation, for blessing in various forms. Ah, what precious associations stand connected with the church of Christ ! How precious and dear is she to our hearts ! And so has it been throughout the whole history of this church and congregation, in the midst of which God's mercy and grace have been so often revealed and enjoyed in their preciousness and power. How many have here heard the word which has made them wise unto salvation ! Truly of "this and of that man" it may be said, he was born here, born to a new and better life, and to a nobler and grander destiny and hope than he had ever known before.

How long has the Gospel been here earnestly preached by that long list of faithful servants of the Master, all but one of whom have now gone to their reward ! What power has that word had for instruction and comfort, for reproof and for salvation ! Well may we rejoice and give thanks in the review of the good work accomplished by this church of Christ through all these passing years and centuries. You do well, my brethren, to observe this occasion. It is becoming thus to look backward over the past, and recall the mercies which have distinguished and marked our experience and history, in order that our gratitude may be awakened and our heartfelt thanksgivings go up to Him who is the Author of all our good.

I bring to you then, my brethren, not only personally and as a neighbouring pastor interested in your history and welfare, but on behalf of the Presbytery which I represent and to which you belong, I bring you sincere congratula-

tions. I congratulate you upon the glorious past, the record of which has been set before us to-day. With all my heart I thank my brother for the care and fidelity with which he has done his work as historian, for the fulness of his investigations, and the clearness with which he has set before us the history of this church during these two hundred years which are now gone by—a history signally marked with blessing, and in the remembrance of which you may well rejoice and give thanks.

But I feel, brethren, that I may congratulate you upon the *present* as well as upon the past. In the possession of this beautiful edifice for Christian worship, in the enjoyment of all the appointed means and ordinances of grace in connection with the ministrations of an earnest and faithful pastor, what more do you need? what more can you ask? The struggles and trials, the wrongs and tears of which we have heard the record to-day, are, happily, matters of the past. There is now “none to molest or make you afraid,” or in any way interfere with your full enjoyment of your Christian liberty. Thus equipped for usefulness and service, and thus enriched with all the privileges of the Gospel in the ordinances of God and His sanctuary, I congratulate you, brethren, upon the present. Using well your means of good, what measure of satisfaction and blessing are in store for you !

But not merely in view of the past and present, but more than all I am moved to congratulate you upon the prospects of the future. Whatever may be true of the past and the present, the future is certainly full of brightness and of promise to you as a church of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Your history as a Christian church has not closed. Indeed, as you enter upon this new century, you enter, I trust, upon a new era of yet wider usefulness, and nobler ser-

vice for the Master. Individual men live their brief three score years and ten, or if by reason of strength it be four-score years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow, and it is soon cut off and they fly away. But not so with a Christian church. Even two hundred years do not here imply infirmity or decrepitude, but rather vigour and increasing strength. This church has but just reached the prime of its manhood, with the prospect and promise of a future yet more glorious than the past. Whatever the past may have been, or whatever the present may be, yet "*there is more to follow.*" Thus even with our best things and the blessings of our spiritual life, the future is always bright with glorious promise and hope. We, my hearers, will soon have passed from these earthly scenes, but this church of Christ will remain and live, I trust, a thousand years—yea to the end of time, from generation to generation, multiplying its agencies, and extending its influences for good.

And if indeed it be true, that the blessed company of God's faithful ones, as they go hence to heaven, still have cognizance of affairs upon the earth, then as the centuries pass, and this Christian church and congregation shall from time to time gather to celebrate the love of God and His kindly dealings, may it not be that we, together with the vast company who have gone up before us from this place, and who, though invisible to our mortal eyes, yet look down upon us to-day—may it not be, I say, when the three hundredth anniversary of this church shall occur, and God's people be here gathered to recount His mercies and record His love, that with those who are thus present with us to-day, and constituting a part of the general assembly and church of the first-born in heaven, we too shall look down upon the assembled congregation, and that not merely as interested spectators or witnesses, but as sharers with them

of their joy? Brethren, we shall not soon forget the scenes through which we are passing to-day. We ought not to do so, but rather to cherish them in our memories, even as we shall doubtless retain an interest in what concerns this beloved church of Christ as we go hence to the eternal world.

Yet one other thought and I conclude. It is sometimes customary in connection with great and joyful occasions like this, to manifest our interest by gifts and offerings. What offering, my Christian brethren, will you make? What gift will you bring to-day in testimony of your appreciation of the peculiar love and mercy which have followed you as a church in all those years of the past—that favour of heaven which crowns the present with so much of blessing, and the future with so much of hope? What so appropriate as a new consecration of yourselves unto God and to His service here—all that you are and all that you have? Are you not indebted to God for all, and will you not give Him of His own, and that by way of acknowledging your obligations and expressing your gratitude for the peculiar mercies of the past, the precious blessings of the present, and the glorious hopes which take hold upon the future which opens before you? Brethren, the time for Christian labour, and service, and suffering here, is short. Let us seek to be found earnest and diligent and faithful in all the work to which God calls us here, even till He shall summon us to the rest and glory of His heavenly kingdom.

Anthem : “Seek ye the Lord.”

ADDRESS

BY THE

REV. JAMES W. JOHNSTON,

Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Mount Kisco, N. Y.

It is a pleasure to me to stand here to-day and perform the duty that has fallen to my lot. I am not here to deliver an address, nor to make a speech, but simply to convey the kindly, filial greetings of the daughter to the mother. As bone of your bone, and flesh of your flesh, we claim a place in your history and a share in your glory. They tell us you were not organized originally as a Presbyterian church. We care nothing for that. It was a vine of the Lord's planting, and we together now enjoy its fruits and rejoice in its shadow. We celebrate to-day no feat of arms, no achievement of science, no wonder of discovery, no triumph of art. Our work has not been a worldly work; our glory is not an earthly glory. Our rejoicing is that we have been an instrument in God's hand—a channel for God's love. The vital forces in nature are, at the same time, the mightiest and the gentlest. The least objective and imposing to the senses, they are the grandest in the results which they bring. The thunderbolt is terrific in its crash, but it leaves only death and ashes in its pathway. As it rends the royal oak, it destroys, in the twinkle of an eye, a century of life's work. But it is always grander to build than to destroy, to produce than to consume. The warrior who is bedecked with the stars of worldly honour, and the splendor of whose deeds dazzles the eye of ambition, is, among the habitations of men, what the thunderbolt is in nature. He is grand in the path of destruction. Such work may, at

times, be needed, but it is always sad to be the instrument in the ministration of death. The ministration of life is rather glorious. And where does earth find the ministration of life? Who builds the waste places? What force heals the bleeding wounds of humanity? What power restores the desolations of mighty havoc? What balm, other than the breath of God, in the Gospel of Jesus, has ever sufficed to heal the iniquity of the souls of men, to check the wastes of life, and to build up a pure and spiritualized, a strong and beautiful manhood? In the Church of Christ are treasured the forces which must overmaster death, and give life, by the vital touch of God. As the unseen and noiseless energies of nature, without any throb of struggling effort, or tremor of labour—without any proclamation of greatness, or declaration of power—daily and nightly build the products of the cultivated fields and the meadows, the beauty of the flowers and the majesty of the forest, so God, by the still, small voice of the Gospel, that comes like the dew, distilled in the silence of the night, and through the instrumentality of the weak things of the world, restores a lost race, and garners a rich harvest of souls. The most God-like, and so the grandest, force that earth has seen, is the power of the Gospel. It is a grand effort in nature that produces a tree, but it is a grander effort from above nature that refashions a sinful soul, and clothes it in the beauty of holiness. To be the receivers and guardians, the legatees and the trustees of such spiritual resources, is an honour higher and more enduring than to lead the armies of a Cæsar, and to startle and dazzle the world with the brilliant exploits of a Napoleon. I would rather have been a deacon in the little church in the wilderness of Bedford, holding the lamp of God to light the way to heaven, than an Alexander, or a Nelson, or

even a Franklin. How many streams of spiritual influence have started here, how widely they have spread, what rich soul-treasures they have borne and are now bearing from country and from city, from east and from west, from Christian lands and from heathen lands, on to the heaven-land above, God only knows. We gather around the old church homestead to-day to bear kindly greetings to the spiritual household mother, not in her to glory, but with her to glory in the cross of Christ; not in her to joy, but with her to rejoice in the Lord; not to her to bring thanksgiving and praise, but with her to give thanks unto the Most High, and praise the name of Him who hath established us in righteousness. The memories of the past goodness of our God we gather with grateful recollection, and with hearts of tender, tearful thankfulness, we weave them into a love-token wreath with which to garland the cross of Christ our Saviour.

ADDRESS

BY THE

REV. JOHN H. EASTMAN,

Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Katonah, N. Y.

I WOULD ask the kind patience of the audience for a moment, assuring them that they are no more uncomfortable than I am, and that I shall not keep myself or them very long. On the seventeenth day of November, 1872, the 3d Presbyterian Church in the town of Bedford was organized by a committee of the Presbytery of Westchester. The pastor and an elder of the church at Mt. Kisco were largely instrumental in the organization of that church, and five of the original members of the church were dismissed

by letter from the church at Mt. Kisco. It was my lot to be the pastor of that church, so I come here to-day as the representative of the grandchild of the Bedford Church to bear to our grandmother our greetings and our good wishes.

Ever since I have been a resident of the town of Bedford,—and I might say that during the first few months of my pastorate I was a resident of the town of Lewisboro, just across the line, but discovering that fact and hearing so much, although Lewisboro was a very good town, I felt I must move over into Bedford,—ever since then I have constantly been learning more and more of the glorious history of the town of Bedford, and the grand position which it occupies in this world of ours. So that I have become a very loyal and devoted citizen of that town, and I think I have fully as much pride to-day in her history as any old resident of the town, although born here and whose family for generations has lived here. But it seems to me that to-day, as I have sat here and have been drinking in these facts of the last two centuries of its history, as they have been so admirably presented to us by our historian, it seems to me my gratitude has been growing stronger and stronger all the time, and more than that I am happy to say that I am Pastor of the church whose grandmother has had such a long and such a glorious history.

And I am sure I shall go back to my work in connection with the grandchild of this church with new inspiration, feeling that having such an ancestry as this, that we shall be true to the ancestry from which we have sprung. This is the wish that I bring, that you and we and the church at Mt. Kisco, in this town of Bedford, that we, representing this form of faith, may be enabled of God to go forward, faithful to do the work that He has for us to do in this part of His vineyard.

The one hundred and seventy-eighth hymn—"Jehovah reigns ! He dwells in light"—was then sung, and the service was closed with the

BENEDICTION.

THE evening service commenced with the Reading of the Holy Scriptures, by REV. GEO. W. F. BIRCH.

Prayer was then offered by REV. EDGAR L. HEERMANCE.

The Hymn, "Glorious things of thee are spoken," was sung.

REV. J. H. HOYT then read several communications from persons unable to be present on this occasion. He added : "I have now the pleasure of introducing to you Mr. Francis A. Palmer, whose largeness of heart gave us this beautiful sanctuary."

ADDRESS

BY

FRANCIS A. PALMER, Esq.

I APPEAR before you this evening, my friends, not from any desire on my part, but by particular request on the part of the friends here.

As one of the sons of the fathers, I rejoice in the opportunity of mingling my sympathies and joys with you, and especially in the services which have taken place thus far this day. The occasion carries me back to the ministry of Mr. Grant. I recall his pastoral visits to my father's house. How acceptable they always were ! A man thoroughly

devoted to his work ; a man of God ; a man whom we were always glad to see ; who had a kind word for every one, young and old.

I remember when Ebenezer Howe—some of you will recollect him, father of Alva Howe—came through the neighbourhood telling us we had a new Minister, and Mr. ^{Green} ~~Giant~~ would preach the following Sabbath. We were rejoiced to know that we had a pastor again. I recollect his preaching here without interruption until the summer of 1831, and I look back to see who were the fathers in this church at that time. I have a little memorandum here. I find here the names of Ebenezer Howe, Samuel Barry, his sons Joseph Barry and Frederick Barry, and their sons. I find here Capt. David Miller, a pillar in the church until the day of his death, and one of the officers. I find here a little later, John ^{Clark} ~~Todd~~, always present and, an officer in the church until he died. His sons are with you. I find here the name of Judge Read. I do not know that I ever came to this church when a boy without seeing Judge Read. He was always a member of the committee ; whenever any one was called upon to come before the committee here, he was always present. I find the name of Captain James Raymond, who was always present. I find Stephen Lounsbury, whose descendants of the third and fourth generations are here with us to-day. I find the name of ^{Shardon} ~~Palmer~~ Lyon and his son Seth Lyon, and then his son Solomon Lyon, who was a schoolmate of mine, who joined the church the same hour that I did. Then I find Mrs. Samuel Trowbridge, who was always here with her family, seven or eight sons, all of whom grew up in the church, and I never knew of one of these people who departed from the faith. They were brought up in the church ; they were constant attendants here, and this

church held up the Bible, and old Mr. Green always used to preach the Bible. These were the descendants of our forefathers. What men were they? We find in the history of Stamford that seven families came there in 1640. They came together and built themselves huts, and they went to work and built up a meeting house. They had no minister. Well the history of it was that two out of seven of the brethren started for Boston to find a minister. They went to Boston, they obtained a minister, but they had no Bible. Bibles were not so plenty then as now, and they brought a Bible in their arms back to Stamford. It took them six weeks to make that trip to Boston and back again. Now that is what has kept my dear friends from that day to this, that is what has kept this people here sound in the faith. It is the original teaching of this blessed word.

In 1831 we had here what was called a "a four days' meeting." Some of the friends here will remember it. Mr. Green commenced, and he preached here four days. The last day he had a little assistance from Mr. Sanderson, from South Salem. I recollect his preaching, and I know that, at that time, it created quite an interest here. I remember that, on the first Sunday in October, 1831, there were forty who joined the church, and I think the record shows that in January there were some seventy-five more. I have thought, sometimes, that we are not living up to our privileges. We have had the lives of these good men before us, they have lived here for generations; yes, for six or seven generations. We have their example, and we have had their prayers, and we are debtors to these good men who lived before us, and I think we ought all to be much better than we are. We ought to be better Christians, we ought to live nearer the cross of Christ, and I would to God that we might renew our

covenant with Him to-day on this two-hundredth anniversary.

AN Address was then made by

JAMES WOOD, Esq.,

President of the Westchester County Historical Society.

ANTHEM : "Show me Thy way, O Lord."

THE Rev. J. Aspinwall Hodge, D.D., Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Hartford, Conn., then spoke :

I trust your patience is not exhausted, for, with Dr. Phraner, I was appointed to bear to you the congratulations of the Presbytery of Westchester. It is not necessary for me to repeat what he has so fully expressed. From Dr. Baird's historical address, I infer that I was chosen as representing Connecticut, from which the colony to Bedford was sent, and Hartford, where the charter was obtained and the name of your town was bestowed. It is difficult, however, to know where I stand in relation to you. We have heard to-day much about the mother, daughter, and granddaughter ; but what can be said of the State and churches of Connecticut who produced, sent forth, and nurtured this colony in the wilderness? Poor Connecticut! despoiled of her territory, separated from her offspring, the last tie, the ecclesiastical, so long ago broken as to be forgotten. What is her relation to the church of Bedford? Like the mother of Moses, who, when unacknowledged in her real relation, accepted a place as hired nurse to her child, so I, for

Connecticut, will take any position, even the humblest, in this household, and, as one with you, join in your grand celebration.

Receive then, our salutation, to this old church of Bedford. Yes, *old!* Not using the word as generally applied to fallen man, groaning under the curse of sin, worn out by the labours and sorrows of earth, hastening to the grave, like a palace deserted of power and mirth, left in silence and falling into ruins. But old, in the true, sanctified meaning of the word, as often used in the Scriptures; old, passing through a development; obtaining strength, experience, wisdom, and manifold graces, and still increasing towards perfection. The aged should be revered. "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man." No reference is made to increasing infirmities, a second childhood, and approaching dissolution, for these effects of sin are in the church counteracted by redemption. Like Moses, when the old man went up Pisgah, "his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated," he had seen God, as one talketh with his friend, and the skin of his face shone with the glory of the Lord. He was made like unto the Ancient of Days, who is described in the Revelation with "His head and hair white as wool, as white as snow, and His eyes as a flame of fire." We greet you, old Bedford, enriched with reverence, experience, wealth, ability, and wisdom, and with all the eternity of age still before you. We congratulate you as you "renew your strength, mount up with wings as eagles; run, and are not weary; and walk, and are not faint."

Do you realize how old you are? Nearly twice as old as our national institutions. You were active in your grand work of forming political character, declaring the

true principles of government, and publishing peace on earth and good will to men, almost one hundred years before our new-born nation was rocked in the cradle of liberty. As you think of these labours, which are still continued, you may feel the dignity of your long service, but you can perceive no weariness nor decline of energy. In this new building, under your young pastor, with revived activity of the people rebaptized by the Holy Spirit, you are conscious of a preparation and zeal for greater efforts. There is an inspiration in age. See this list of Ministers who have here laboured and prayed, and preached the Gospel. I would that their names were engraven on the walls, that, when your pastor comes into this church trembling under responsibility, and anxious concerning the effects of his message, he may realize that he has entered into their labours to reap what they have sown, to receive the answer to their prayers, that he cannot labour in vain, that he is not to declare some new gospel, a cunningly devised fable, but the truth received from God, declared for two centuries to this people, and proved to be "the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation," an eternal benediction. Who would not feel encouraged and strengthened by such a sight? Of these, I knew personally only Peter Heroy, the last of the honoured pastors, who was one of the first to welcome me into the Presbytery. I saw enough of his Christlike spirit and faithful labours to congratulate most heartily the man who has taken up the mantle that fell from him, and has received a double portion of his spirit.

The question has been asked to-day, How is it that this church has attained to the age of two hundred years? The full answer is given in the opening chapters of the Book of Revelation. The Lord Jesus Christ is described as walk-

ing among the candlesticks. He recalls the past history of each church ; speaks in detail of its labours and varied experiences. His reproofs and warnings are because of neglect or denial of His name and truth, and the adoption of some other doctrine. His approbation and promise of continuance are connected with the keeping of His word, the holding and obeying of His doctrine. This church has not had its candlestick removed, because it has taught the truth as it is in Jesus—the old doctrine of salvation by grace, taught under all dispensations. There can be no change in this plan of God, this eternal truth. There is change in our comprehension of it. The sun is the same to-day as it was centuries ago, but we know more about it. Its rays are the same as when, on the vanishing flood, it painted the rainbow ; but we are learning how its rays are separated into the marvellous colors. It brings returning spring, and draws from the earth beauty and fruitfulness, as when God first bade the grass and plants to put forth abundantly ; but we have been able to comprehend something, though comparatively little, of the great mystery of life. So the Gospel taught in the old Bible is the same doctrine of everlasting and unchangeable truth. It is the same because devised, revealed, made efficient by God. We understand the doctrine better, but cannot improve it. We know it only in part. Like the prophets of old, we desire to know “what the Spirit did signify when He testified of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.” Therefore the lesson, which your history teaches with peculiar emphasis, is that which was urged by Mr. Palmer—the existence as well as the prosperity of a church, depends upon its fidelity to this dear old Bible, and to the venerable and precious doctrine contained therein. Turn not aside from the truth ; adopt no new-fangled notions ; do

not hesitate to maintain that which you have received, and which has made this church a birthplace of souls and a blessing unto all. "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

REV. J. H. HOYT: The Rev. Dr. Adams is here, and has had this occasion on his memory for a year. I think it hardly fair that the time should all be taken up and not give him an opportunity to say a word to-night.

REV. DR. ADAMS: I could hardly refuse when asked to say a single word upon this occasion, because my heart is here.

We have been on high places here to-day, my dear friends. We have heard of great and of illustrious names, names not known largely, it may be, in the history of the world, but names written in the Lamb's Book of Life, and they are shining on this night of this two hundredth anniversary, in the heavens above.

Now what shall be the thought that we shall take away with us from these high and delightful places into which God has this day called us? For a moment I have been thinking of that mount of vision where Moses and Elias and our Lord met together, where the face of the dear Lord shone with the very brightness of Heaven, and when their eyes were opened they beheld "Jesus only." And with all the pleasures of this occasion, and all its delightful moments and recollections, let us take with us this one thought, "Jesus only," so that the inspiration of our lives in the future, and the best we have, shall be laid upon His altar.

ADDRESS

BY THE

REV. JAMES D. WILSON, D.D.,

Minister of the Central Presbyterian Church, of New York.

DEAR FRIENDS :—I feel at home among you to-night as I felt at home among you this afternoon. There are two links that bind me to this church, though I never looked on the village of Bedford until noon to-day.

You have already heard from the churches around about, the children and the grandchildren. You have heard from the Presbytery which has brought its congratulations here through Dr. Phraner and Dr. Hodge. Now the Presbyteries standing side by side, form a Synod ; and the Synod of New York covers the whole of New England. It runs up to Poughkeepsie, and in my poor way as an officer of the Synod I am here to-night to bring you the congratulations of the Synod of New York. We are proud of this, the oldest church in the Synod ; and I am sure there is not one of the brethren within the bounds of the Synod from Boston on the one side to Port Jarvis on the other, but will feel a throb of gratitude when he reads the record of this day. It has been a splendid record. There is another tie that binds me to this church, and it is a valued tie. I do not want to speak much about it because I am a young man. I have had the pleasure of being the pastor of your pastor and his wife. How well I remember that bright June day, now nearly five years ago, when these two servants of the Master, amid the June roses, in that historic ground just this side of the Hudson near Tarrytown, joined their right hands to walk together in the pathway of this

mortal life, and I felt then that in the beauty of that bright summer's day, and amid the beauty of the surroundings, there was an indication of joy and happiness to come, and I thank God that I have lived to see it realized in some measure this hour. It is a great thing to be the pastor of a church two hundred years old, that has lived such a life and has left the record which belongs to this church to-day.

I think we ought to be devoutly thankful for that historical record which we heard this afternoon. It was not only admirable, to my judgment, it was almost faultless. It is worth while holding a two hundredth anniversary just for the pleasure of listening to and having in one's possession such a paper as that.

Then it ought to be a source of joy to see the interest that this community have shown to-day in such an anniversary. Dr. Prime said to me, "I have just been out counting the wagons, and it brought to my mind in a fresh sense that passage in the Old Testament where we read that Jacob's heart revived within him when he saw the wagons ;" and I think every man and woman's heart should revive within them when they see such an interest manifested in an occasion like this.

Christianity is older than two hundred years. Infidelity is older than two hundred years. Have you ever read of the two hundredth anniversary of any infidel institution? There have been infidel associations. Whoever attended a fiftieth anniversary of one of them? What is the difference? Just the difference between nothing and the Lord Almighty. Infidelity has no power because it has no God. Christianity is stronger than the hills, because it has the heart-beat of the Almighty in it. There are other things for which we are taught to be thankful to day. We

all ought to be grateful for having been born in the country. I look at my children, and I look upon them with commiseration because they happened to be born in New York. Why, think of it. When a boy or girl is born in the city, what have they to remember? Stone paved streets all alike. Brick walls for the most part all alike. Moving every three or four years from house to house. How different with the child born in the country where every tree, every turn in the road, every bird on the trees, every crossing of the way has a sweet and precious memory.

The unwritten history of this church—who shall speak it? who shall understand it? How many a man has stood in the bright summer sun, holding the plough in the valley beyond, and his heart has been heavy. He has thought of his troubles; troubles at home, troubles in business,—and then he has remembered what some man of God said to him last Sunday, and he has taken hold of the plough handles with a firmer grasp, and spoken to his team with a “cheerier” word, and gone on to turn the furrow with a braver heart.

How many a mother in the lonely hours of the night has watched over the cradle of her sick child thinking of the shadow that was to come, thinking of the little mound that might be ere long down in the cemetery; then she remembered some hymn of heaven that last Sunday was chanted in the house of God, and out of the bosom of that hymn as upon golden wings consolation was carried down into that aching heart. O the unwritten history of the old Bedford Church!

How many a man in the city of New York, troubled, perplexed, worried almost beyond endurance with anxiety, has thought of the dear old home in Bedford, of father and mother who are thinking of him there, and praying

for him there, and has said, Now I will be brave, I will be patient for that dear old home's sake up in Westchester County. Let us see to it that we do the work which we have to do. If we have farms to till, let us till them with the utmost possible skill ; if we have shops to care for, let us see that we are the best mechanics in the whole country ; if we have stores, let us see to it that we remember that there are always two persons to a bargain, the one that buys and the one that sells ; and then though we know nothing of what will be in the world or what will come to pass in the next two hundred years from this time, we do know that if our duty has been well done those that will come after us will rise up to call us blessed. And may the blessing of God, the Father Almighty, and Christ our only Lord and Saviour, and the Holy Spirit our Comforter be with us always. Amen.

The one hundred and twenty-fourth hymn—

“ From all that dwell below the skies
Let the Creator's praise arise,”

was then sung, with the DOXOLOGY, and the BENEDICTION was pronounced by the Pastor.

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