

# E B E N E Z E R :

## A MEMORIAL

OF THE SEMI-CENTENARY OF THE PASTORATE OF THE

REV. JAMES LINN, D. D.

Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Bellefonte, Pennsylvania.

CONTAINING

A NARRATIVE BY DR. LINN,

AND A

SEMI-CENTENARY SERMON

By REV. D. X. JUNKIN, D. D.

Of Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania.



PHILADELPHIA :

WILLIAM S. & ALFRED MARTIEN.

No. 606 CHESTNUT STREET.

1859.

B285  
B411

## ORDER OF EXERCISES

AT THE CELEBRATION OF THE SEMI-CENTENARY OF THE PASTORATE  
OF THE REV. JAMES LINN, D. D.

VOLUNTARY, by the . . . . . CHOIR.  
INVOCATION, by . . . . . DR. WOODS.  
PSALMODY, by . . . . . DR. GIBSON.  
PRAYER, by . . . . . MR. HAMILL.  
NARRATIVE ADDRESS, by . . . . DR. LINN.  
JUBILEE ODE, announced by . . . DR. THOMPSON.  
SERMON, by . . . . . DR. JUNKIN.  
PRAYER, by . . . . . MR. GEO. ELLIOTT.  
PSALMODY, by . . . . . MR. D. D. CLARK.  
BENEDICTION, by . . . . . DR. LINN.

REV. JAMES LINN, D. D.

*Dear Sir*—The undersigned Committee, on behalf of the Presbyterian congregation of which you are the pastor, having heard with great pleasure and satisfaction the interesting Narrative given by you on the occasion of the celebration of the Semi-Centenary of your pastorate, during the sitting of the Presbytery of Huntingdon, would most respectfully request a copy of the same for publication.

Very Respectfully Yours, &c.

EDWARD C. HUMES,  
WILLIAM P. WILSON,  
E. BLANCHARD,  
J. T. HOOVER,  
GEORGE L. POTTER,  
JAMES A. BEAVER,

*Committee.* \*

BELLEFONTE, October 7, 1859.

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TO MR. E. C. HUMES, AND OTHERS.

*Gentlemen*—I yield to your request to have a copy of my Narrative for publication—not because it has and particular merit in it, but because the request is made by my esteemed friends, to whom it may be gratifying to know some of the facts pertaining to the church with which we are connected.

Respectfully Yours,

JAMES LINN.

October 12, 1859.

REV. D. X. JUNKIN, D. D.

*Dear Sir*—The undersigned Committee, on behalf of the Presbyterian congregation at Bellefonte, having heard with great pleasure and satisfaction the sermon delivered by you last evening on the occasion of the "Semi-Centenary" of the pastorate of the Rev. James Linn, D. D., most respectfully request a copy of the same for publication.

Respectfully Yours,

EDWARD C. HUMES,  
WILLIAM P. WILSON,  
E. BLANCHARD,  
J. T. HOOVER,  
GEORGE L. POTTER,  
JAMES A. BEAVER,

*Committee.*

BELLEFONTE, *October 6*, 1859.

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E. C. HUMES, ESQ. AND OTHERS.

*Gentlemen*—Your kind note, asking for a copy of my discourse of last evening, is received; and whilst, in my own judgment, the sermon is not worthy of the perpetuity which printing gives, yet I most cheerfully furnish it as a contribution towards a memorial of the very interesting occasion upon which it was pronounced.

Very Respectfully,

D. X. JUNKIN.

BELLEFONTE, *October 6*, 1859.

# NARRATIVE BY DR. LINN.

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## FIFTY YEARS IN THE MINISTRY!

WHAT a great number of events have occurred in that time, to engage the recorder's pen! Events full of importance to the State, and to the Church; to those in public and in private life; to families and to individuals! The period appears very long in the prospect, especially when something of importance is expected. But, when it is past, and comes to be the subject of review, it seems to be short, as "a tale that has been told, or as a watch of the night." Many sad and sorrowful emotions rise in the heart, in calling up to remembrance what has taken place within that time; and especially, in what we have been personally concerned. "Our fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?" But it has not been *all* sadness. There are pleasant circumstances to be recollected, which are matter for cordial thanks to the great Giver of all good.

In speaking of the semi-century of my pastorate in this church, now terminating, and which we now cele-

brate, I must of necessity bring myself into notice, more than is really desirable. Native diffidence recoils from it, and would rather pass it over in silence, than make it a matter of notoriety, by the name of a celebration. That which is to be brought to notice, in speaking of the half-century now closing, does not pertain to the Church in general, but to that in which I myself have been concerned. If it had been something of a general nature, any other time or place would have answered as well as this. It is *MY fifty years* to which the remarks are to be directed. A pastorate of fifty years in one church is a thing of rare occurrence.

Let us take a brief and cursory notice of my introduction into this Presbytery, and of what the state and condition of the Presbytery then was.

I was licensed to preach the gospel in the fall of 1808, by the Presbytery of Carlisle—a noble band of venerable men, and men of talents. It was an honour of no small measure, to have been licensed by such a body, to preach within their bounds. During the winter following I fulfilled appointments made for me to preach in some of their vacancies; and I spent some Sabbaths in the southern part of this Presbytery. In the spring of 1809, I visited the congregations of Spruce Creek and Sinking Valley, at the request of a member of Presbytery, to offer myself as a candidate for a call to be their pastor. After a few Sabbaths spent with them, the first named congregation expressed a desire to give me a call. But the other was not prepared to do so, because of a verbal

engagement which they had with the Rev. David Bard, then residing among them—he having been elected to Congress for the district, as it then was, for two or three terms; and the sessions not being as long then as they are now, he was at home a considerable portion of the year, and at those times he supplied their pulpit.

I then left them, having made many friends in both churches. By what appeared to me a particular interposition of Providence in my case, I came to this place, which had been left vacant shortly before, by the removal of the Rev. Henry R. Wilson,\* their former pastor. He had gone to Carlisle, shortly before my coming here, having been appointed to a Professorship in Dickinson College. A meeting of Presbytery had been specially called, in June, to dismiss him; but commissioners from both congregations were there, and opposed it. He came back to continue in his ministerial work; but in a short time he changed his mind again, and went with his family to Carlisle.

I came to this place a perfect stranger, except as I was seen by the commissioners at that meeting of Presbytery. Some of the leading members of this church having heard of me, and that I was visiting in the bounds of the Presbytery, expressed a wish that I would come and visit them. By a friend, the late William Norris, Esq.—whom I accidentally met at Lewistown, as I was on my way from Spruce Creek

\* Father of the present Rev. Dr. Henry R. Wilson.

to my native place, not knowing where I was to go from that place—I was informed that this congregation was vacant; that Mr. Wilson was gone to Carlisle, and that they had a wish to see and hear me. I immediately changed my course, and came hither the next day; and though I was not specially invited, and had not in my possession any Presbyterian record to show my authority to preach, I was received most cordially by the ruling elders and other members of the church. I was invited to preach for them, and did so on two or three Sabbaths. The members of the church were, in refinement of manners, and in theological attainments, equal to any church in central Pennsylvania; and though I made no particular pretensions to either, they were pleased with me, and prepared a unanimous call for me.

A committee from Lick Run congregation waited on me, and invited me to visit them. I did so, and preached for them a few Sabbaths. They had a meeting, and voted a call for me for the one-half of my time. In this meeting there was but one dissenting voice, but he who objected was overruled, and a call was made out in the regular way. I met the Presbytery in the following October, at Mifflin. Mr. Wilson was present, and was dismissed at his own request. I was received as a licentiate, on a dismissal from the Presbytery of Carlisle. The calls were taken to Presbytery by commissioners from the two churches. They were received as being in order, and put into my hand. I accepted them; and arrangements were made for my ordination, to take place at

the next stated meeting, which was to be in April. I immediately commenced performing the duties in the churches, so far as I was competent as a licentiate, preaching regularly, according to the calls.

I was ordained in the Court-house, which was then the place for public worship. I was installed pastor of the churches of Bellefonte and Lick Run. In that service, the Rev. Mr. Coulter preached the sermon, and the Rev. Mr. Grier\* presided, and gave the charge. I continued to perform pastoral duties to the churches, with mutual satisfaction to myself and them, until the fall of 1839, when I was released from Lick Run congregation by Presbytery, that I might give all my pastoral labours to this congregation, being invited by them by a unanimous vote. In the course of fifty years, I have been twice called to this church by a unanimous vote; first for the half of my time, and again for the whole time. Nothing has ever occurred to make a change desirable, on the part of the pastor; nor, so far as I know, has it been on the part of the congregation, or any portion of them.

I wish, in behalf of my young brethren, that they may have the period of their pastoral connection protracted so long as mine has been, and that it may be filled up with as much harmony between them and the people of their charge, as has been enjoyed in my experience; and that they may be more useful in their place than I have been in mine.

\* Father of Judge Grier, of the Supreme Court of the United States, and of the Rev. Isaac Grier, of Northumberland Presbytery.

I will here turn aside a little to take notice of the origin of this congregation, so far as I have knowledge of the facts pertaining to it; and of the state of it when I became the pastor, and in subsequent times.

I have not been able to find in our Presbyterial book any record of the organization of this church; the presumption is, that it was organized in regular form and order. The records may not have been so fully kept, and so carefully, as they now are; some circumstance, not known to us now, may have been the cause of an omission in recording some parts of our early history.

An application had been made for supplies for this place, and sometimes for Milesburg, as early as 1795, and perhaps earlier; and the organization may have been about the year 1800: during the year or two following, they were visited by candidates for pastoral settlement. Some time in 1802, Mr. Wilson, a licentiate of the Presbytery of Carlisle, was chosen to be the pastor, and was installed in the spring of 1803 pastor of the united congregations of Bellefonte and Lick Run.

The Session of Bellefonte at first consisted of Col. James Dunlap, James Harris, Robert Boggs, and James Foster. Additions were made in Mr. Wilson's time of James Steel, George Williams, J. G. Lowrey, and Joseph Williams. In my time, William Alexander was added, having been an elder in West Kishacoquillas. Afterwards, Hamilton Humes and Thomas McKee were chosen. After that, Henry Vandyke,

James Irvin, and James Harris, Jr., were chosen. After that, William Baird, Jr., Thomas M. Giffin, and S. H. Linn, were chosen.

I now regret that I have not preserved the early catalogue of church members. I do not now recollect what the number was in Mr. Wilson's time—it was perhaps about fifty. I did not think of the satisfaction which might be afforded by having a regular succession in the catalogue. I renewed it from time to time only to show how the number then was, without keeping in view those who had been members, but had been removed by death or otherwise.

Since I have been connected with this church, there has been very little to interrupt its peace and harmony. I have lived with the Session and with the church in unity. While I have not assumed to be dictatorial, any measures which I have recommended, or any change which I have proposed in the form and order of worship, have been readily adopted. I can now think of it with great satisfaction, that I have never had a personal quarrel with any one in the church, or out of it.

I now turn to consider some facts pertaining to the Presbytery of Huntingdon. It was organized by the Synod of Philadelphia about the year 1795. It was composed of members and churches set off from the Presbytery of Carlisle. When I became connected with it in 1809, it comprised all the territory and all the Presbyterian churches then existing in the bounds of this and the Northumberland Presbyteries. It consisted of twelve members—namely: Messrs. Dun-

ham, Bryson, Patterson, Grier, Hood, Bard, Stephens, John Johnston, James Johnston, Coulter, Stuart, and Hutchison. They all had pastoral charges, except Mr. Bard, who acted as stated supply in Sinking Valley and Frankstown, now Hollidaysburg. They all lived to be old men, and finished their course in one pastoral charge, except Mr. Stephens, who moved from Waynesburg to Shaver's Creek, and Mr. Grier, who moved from Pine Creek to Northumberland.

In the fall of 1811 the Presbytery was divided by an act of the Synod. That part which was afterwards called the Presbytery of Northumberland, consisted of five members, and this side consisted of nine. At the meeting of Presbytery last before the division, Mr. Kennedy was ordained and installed pastor of the church in Lewistown. His name and mine increased the original number to nine. All the pastors, except two, were settled in their charges when they were young men; and they lived to be old men, having no other charges than those in which they were originally settled. We may notice, with grateful hearts, the goodness of the Head of the Church to us, in giving to us great enlargement. From being only eight pastoral charges, they have increased to about twenty, and four stated supplies; and the number of our members has increased from eight or nine to thirty-five. And in the Northumberland Presbytery, where there were only four pastoral charges, there are now seventeen; and from five members they have grown to be twenty-six; where, fifty years ago, there were only twelve members, there are now sixty-six.

We may ask—and thus wake up sorrowful recollections—where are now those who were the ministers when I commenced my course? Alas! they are gone. Their former places know them no more. They have gone to give an account of their stewardship to Him who appointed them as labourers in his Church; and if they have been found faithful unto death, they have received a crown of glory that fadeth not away—our loss is their gain.

Of those who were members of the Presbytery of Carlisle when I was licensed, not one remains but Dr. Heron, now very aged. Of the Northumberland Presbytery, as it was at first, not one remains. Of this Presbytery, not one survives of those who composed it when I became a member. Some of these brethren were very precious to me. Many seasons of delightful intercourse come up in sad yet pleasant remembrance. I can, in imagination, see them as they, with countenances sprightly and joyous, stretched out their hand to bid their visitors welcome to their dwellings; and as I went with them in sweet counsel to the house of God. I may apply to myself the pathetic lines of Dr. Watts:

“ My friends, beloved in happier days,  
The dear companions of my ways,  
Descend around me to the tomb.”

Of the Synod of Philadelphia there is not an individual remaining who was a member when I first attended its meetings, which was in the spring of 1810; and there is not an individual in the whole Synod who has been a pastor in one church for

fifty years, except myself. Dr. McDowell, pastor of Spring Garden church, is an older minister than I am, but he has changed his pastoral relation two or three times. Dr. Neill is also older in the ministry than I am, but he is not a pastor, and he has changed his connection several times. Neither of these venerable men was a member of Synod when I became connected with it.

Ah! what a blank has been made in the list of ministerial brethren! How have those who have stood prominent in the Church, fallen! Many of them had arrived at a good old age. They have come to their graves, as a shock of corn cometh in its season, laden with ripe fruit.

But many are gone who came into the ministry, and in younger years acted with us. Memory loves to think of them, and run over times and scenes, in which I have been associated with some of them in our respective homes and fields of labour. Here are recorded in our memory and hearts, Moore, and McGinnis, and Nourse, and Peebles, and Stuart of Kishacoquillas, and Betts, and Thompson, and Boyd, and Keating, and Morrison, and Ried the missionary, and young Coulter. These have all been called away from the fields of their labour, while yet in the meridian of life. Dear to memory, they have fallen around me on every side. And often I inquire, why am I left remaining? They had capacities for being as useful as I am, yea more so. Why have they been taken away from the field of their usefulness, and I

have work still to do, dragging along through the infirmities that less or more attend advanced age.

I often think of what I heard the Rev. Dr. Ashbel Green say in the General Assembly, at the semi-centenary celebration of that body. He had been appointed to give a brief history of the General Assembly, from its organization up to that time. He was then very feeble. And adverting to the death of his partners and fellow-labourers, he said he was like an old tree standing in an open field, all the others having fallen. "And," said he, "why am I spared, while so many others have been called away? It is that I may tell the story of the wonderful goodness of God to the Presbyterian Church in this land."

In review of my connection with this Presbytery, and with this church, I feel thankful to God for the many mercies which I have received at his hands. I have enjoyed a measure of health above many of my brethren. I have had some seals of my ministry. I see them around me. Others have been removed by distance or death. I wish there had been many more. I am thankful for the friendship that has been, and still is, between me and my co-presbyters. I have passed my time with them in peace and unity. I have had some experience of what the Psalmist says: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." I have been respected, more than I have deserved, both by ministerial brethren and church members. I have never made pretensions to worthiness of distinction in any way. I

have thought others better than myself. My effort has been to move along quietly in my place, and to live peaceably with all men. Some one thought it would be a proper token of respect for me to have a theological title attached to my name. I cannot doubt the goodness of the motive which prompted the mover in this case. But he has over-estimated my qualifications for that degree. I have no scruples of conscience respecting the wearing of titles; but I never thought myself possessed of the mental power and theological attainments that would qualify me for having such distinction.

I have been now a long time here. I am preaching to the third generation, and baptizing the fourth. I was never given to change in my locality. I had not the example of it in my early years. Those venerable ministers with whom I was acquainted in my boyhood, lived and died in one and the same charge. Some of them I may mention, viz. Dr. Cooper, Dr. King, Mr. Paxton, Mr. Waugh, Mr. Snodgrass, and my venerated father. There is much more of a disposition now for making changes than when I was young. Whether it is for the advantage of the Church, or for the benefit of ministers, I do not undertake to say. But I would rather see less of it than there is in many places.

To my brethren, advanced in years with myself, I express my earnest wish, that in the evening of your days you may enjoy abundance of that peace which passeth all understanding.

I wish that you, my younger brethren, may live long—that you may be happy in your pastoral connections, that you may be abundantly useful in your labours, and that you may be allowed to see the time when you and your churches shall enjoy as happy a semi-centennial celebration as I do, this day!

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# HYMN OF JUBILEE.

*Tune—ZION.*

WRITTEN FOR THE SEMI-CENTENARY OF THE PASTORATE OF THE  
REV. JAMES LINN, D.D.

BY D. X. JUNKIN, D.D.

Come, thou gracious King of glory,  
In this hour of jubilee:  
Whilst we tell the grateful story  
Of deliv'rance wrought by thee,  
Be thou present,  
Bid us now thy glory see!

Bow thine ear, God of our fathers,  
To our glowing songs of praise,  
Warming still, as mem'ry gathers  
Grateful themes from other days:  
Lord, we praise thee,  
For thy grace in by-gone days.

Thanks we give for ceaseless favours  
Following us these fifty years!  
Thine is love that never wavers,  
Beaming on, through smiles and tears!  
JUBILATE  
Praise the grace of fifty years!!

Thanks we give, that thou hast planted  
On this mount a chosen vine;  
Gracious rain and sunshine granted,  
Heged it round, and called it thine,  
Gathering from it  
Clustering grapes and generous wine!

Thanks we give, that no disaster  
Has laid waste thy heritage;  
That our venerated pastor,  
As in *youth*, so now in *age*,  
Tells of Jesus,  
And the heavenly heritage!

May his life, O Lord, be precious;  
Spare him to this trusting flock.  
May his teachings long refresh us—  
Lead us to the sheltering Rock:  
Saviour bless him,  
Who so long has fed this flock!

And when, all his labours ended,  
Life's last ebbing sands are told,  
May the flock, he so long tended,  
Meet him in the heavenly fold;  
There to praise Thee,  
Whilst eternal years are rolled!!

# SEMI-CENTENARY SERMON.

BY D. X. JUNKIN, D. D.

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EBENEZER: HITHERTO HATH THE LORD HELPED US!

1 SAMUEL vii. 12.

**BELoved BRETHREN**—There are moments of peculiar interest and solemnity in the history of individuals and of societies: and such is the present epoch in your history. There are points of time, in our fleeting days, which seem to start into prominence, and, like some tall and solitary headland, remind us of the leagues already traversed in the voyage of life; and admonish us of those that may still lie between us and our loved but distant home. Moments, brief and fleeting as other moments, are often pregnant with the memories of ages past; or with the destiny of ages yet to come. Times and seasons which, to the eyes of the unobservant, are not distinguishable from other times, yet gather importance from the seasons and events with which they stand associated. And such a time is the present, in the history of your church and congregation. You stand this day, as it were upon an eminence; from which it may be both pleasant and profitable to cast a retrospective glance at the scenes of your past his-

tory, and also to look forward to that part of your pilgrimage that still lies before, and to the solemn *issues* that are associated with the past, the present, and the future. As when the way-worn traveller has reached the summit of some lofty mountain, he turns and contemplates, with pleasure and with profit, the hills and vallies and rivers and plains, across which his weary path has already led him: so it may be profitable for individuals and societies to pause, at particular epochs of their history, and review the scenes, through which they have been led, and meditate upon the reverses and successes, the trials and the triumphs, which may have marked their course. And as the traveller turns from retrospect to prospect, and gazes with mingled emotions of anxiety and hope over the scenes that lie before him, glancing from hill to hill, and over vallies and plains, through which his path meanders; pondering the toils and dangers that may yet await him—longing for the *home* towards which he bends his way; and applying the experience of his former journeyings to avoid the dangers that may beset his future pathway: so, in our Christian pilgrimage, there is wisdom in drawing lessons from the past, to fling light upon the future, and in so improving former experiences, as to nerve our hearts and gird our loins for running with patience the race set before us.

The event which you this day celebrate, forms one of those intensely interesting crises in the history of a Christian congregation, from which it may be both pleasant and profitable to look backward and to

glance forward. It is an epoch not only interesting for its pleasant and mournful memories, but awfully solemn, in view of the *responsibilities* and *results*, temporal and eternal, of a faithful and lovely pastorate of half a century: and if the spirits of the departed are permitted to revisit the scenes of their earthly sojourn, and to take an interest in the affairs of those they have left behind, the present occasion must awaken the glad sympathies of the pious dead, whose souls have ripened for glory under this pastorate; and whose bodies in yonder, or some more distant graves, await the tones of the trump of God, which shall call them to a glorious resurrection!

The *place* upon which we are congregated; the *circumstances* under which we are met; the *object* of our present assemblage; and the *associations* which cluster round all these—associations that come upon wings of memory from the rapidly receding past, and on wings of faith and hope from the glorious but awful future; all—all conspire to gather around the present occasion a solemnity of interest that belongs both to earth and heaven! The place has long been holy ground; consecrated by the gathering together of God's people in his holy name, which secures his own gracious presence according to charter guarantee. This is the Mount Zion, to which your fathers for many years bent their footsteps from Sabbath to Sabbath. Here they sat under the droppings of that gospel, which brings life and immortality to light. Upon this sacred spot they tuned their voices in the songs of Zion. Here they reared the golden altar

and kindled the incense of prayer. Upon this hallowed spot they spread the sacramental board, and commemorated a Saviour's dying love. Here they held sweet communion with one another and with God. And here, we trust, many of those who have gone before you, have by grace been prepared for a place in "the General Assembly and Church of the first-born, written in Heaven." Of this consecrated place it may of many be said, "this man and that man was born here." Upon this spot of earth, too, many of yourselves were brought to the baptismal font, and upon your infant brow has here been poured, by your venerated pastor, the symbol of a Saviour's quickening and cleansing Spirit and pardoning blood. Hither you have turned your footsteps in childhood's sunny hours, to receive the instructions of the Sabbath-school, and to sit with your parents under the droppings of the sanctuary. Here you have taken sweet counsel together. Here the voice of solemn warning and winning invitation has again and again sounded in your ears. Here, we fondly trust, many of you have experienced the throbbing, melting heart, the tearful eye, and the dawning hope of immortality. And here you have learned to become "followers of them, who through faith and patience do inherit the promises." The arms that bore you to the baptismal font may now lie nerveless in the lonely grave. The hands that led you to this mount of God may be palsied by death. The voices that first taught yours to praise and pray, may be hushed in the silence of the tomb. But the holiest memories of the loved and

lost, still linger round this hallowed spot, and are identified with your feelings of love and veneration for this dear, this cherished old pastor! How mellowing the memories! How tender, thrilling and awful are the associations of this consecrated place! and how fraught with recollections of absorbing interest to the pastor, the people, and the friends of this congregation, is the event that has occasioned the present solemnity. The fiftieth anniversary of a Christian pastorate in the same flock! An event, alas! as rare as it is lovely and pleasant to contemplate! In view of the history of that pastorate, a sketch of which our beloved father has already given; in view of the peace and harmony and prosperity that has, in general, characterized your past; in view of the long-continued services of your venerable pastor; in view of the fact that God has not only continued you in existence, but has lengthened the cords and strengthened the stakes of his tabernacle here; and in view of his many mercies and deliverances wrought for your fathers and yourselves during the last fifty years, are you not disposed to imitate the example of Samuel, the judge and the prophet of Israel, and erect a memorial of the past, and call it "Ebenezer:" saying, "hitherto hath the Lord helped us!"

The children of God have, in every age, recognized their Heavenly Father's hand in every event of life; and so they ever will. If sorrows cloud their pathway, and storms of adversity beat upon them, they, with calm resignation, acknowledge "it is the Lord, let him do as seemeth him good." And if their cup

overflows with blessings, and peace and prosperity crown their lives, they, with joyful promptness, ascribe it all to their covenant God. It is at once the duty and the felicity of individual Christians, and of Christian societies, to pursue this course; and especially when occasions arise calculated to recall to our minds the many mercies and deliverances which our God has vouchsafed, we should rejoice to erect our Ebenezer, and thankfully acknowledge "hitherto hath the Lord helped us." It was thus with the distinguished ruler and prophet, whose words we have chosen as our motto, and with the religious society in which he was a leader. On an occasion of special deliverance, they celebrated not only that event, but all God's mercies to their Church and nation; and the words of our text were uttered in recognition of all God's benefactions to the Church in her past history, although a particular deliverance was the immediate occasion of it. The enemies of Israel, the Philistines, had been long triumphant. Some years previous to the administration of Samuel, the Church and nation had been severely punished for grievous backslidings. Their armies had been defeated, and the ark of God, the most sacred part of their tabernacle furniture, had been taken and carried away by the Philistines. Some time after its restoration, Samuel entered upon the duties of prophet and judge in Israel, and he began his administration by calling on the people to forsake idolatry, repent, reform, and return to the true worship of the true God, as the only means of recovering his favour. They did repent and reform.

The persecuting Philistines, hearing of this revival of the true religion in Israel, immediately invaded the country, and came upon them whilst assembled at a great religious festival. "And as Samuel was offering up the burnt-offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but Jehovah thundered with a great thunder on that day, upon the Philistines, and discomfited them, and they were smitten before Israel. . . . Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

You perceive, then, that these words were uttered at a time when the Church was reviewing the mercies of their covenant God, and erecting a memento of his past deliverances; and the example thus placed before us is worthy to be imitated by every believer, and every congregation of the Lord, in every age. The individual Christian for himself, and the Church in her associated capacity, should esteem it a duty and a privilege to recount the mercies of her glorious Head, to tell of his wondrous works, and to erect her Ebenezer, and proclaim to the world, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us!"

It was under a conviction of the propriety of this course, that your speaker selected this passage as the motto of this discourse; for he supposed that the very object of the present solemnity was the erection of an Ebenezer, to be at once a memorial of God's past mercy, and a pledge of his future favour to this pastor, this people, and this Presbytery, who have now for more than half a century been associated in

the service of our common Lord, and the dissemination and maintenance of our common principles.

It is true, you as a Christian congregation, and the other churches associated with you in this venerable Presbytery, have not been the subjects of any very marked and wonderful vicissitude. It has not been necessary for our God to make bare his arm to deliver us from such terrible calamities as befel Israel of old. No domineering Philistines have been permitted to reduce us to subjection by military power, and to eat out our substance, or invade our rights of conscience, and destroy our freedom of worship; and hence such signal deliverance as God wrought for Israel was not needful in our case. But is there, on this account, no claim upon our gratitude?—have we *less* for which to praise him? Is it not a richer blessing to be exempt from danger, and persecution, and sword, than to suffer these calamities, and then be delivered? Is it not more kind in our Father to keep the Philistines at a distance, than to permit their invasion, and then deliver us? Is not exemption from calamity, sin, and sorrow, quite as great a blessing as deliverance? Whilst, then, we may have no miraculous or extraordinary interpositions of the Lord to recite, yet you as a congregation, and we as a Presbytery, have a long catalogue of mercies to recount; we have deliverances of which to tell, victories to celebrate, and loving-kindnesses to record with grateful hearts. And you especially, pastor and people of Bellefonte, on this fiftieth anniversary of your union as minister and flock, ought surely to erect a

memento of God's great goodness, and call it "Ebenezer—saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us!"

In our text there is a *doctrine* taught, and a *duty* enforced. Let us very briefly glance at each.

1st. The *doctrine* taught is that of man's entire dependence upon God; and that God is the author of all our mercies and deliverances. It is "the Lord helps us." This is the doctrine which the Scriptures, with great explicitness and frequency, inculcate; and it is a doctrine which sound reason and an honest conscience enforce. Short of atheism we cannot stop; if we assume that, in a single instance, we can either exist, act, or enjoy, independently of God. For if it were possible for the creature to be independent of the Creator, then there would be two or more independent beings in the same world; limit would be put to the Creator's power and control—God would not be supreme. If in any case we can, without God's help, accomplish the ends of our being, in that matter, at least, we would be independent of God; and if independent of him in one, why not in another, and another, and in all things? A single link in the chain of dependence being broken, that chain which binds us to Jehovah's throne is sundered—man's dependence and God's supremacy exist no longer—God's government is ended: the wildest wishes of the rebellious would be realized, and a universe of lawless atheists might exult over the demolition of the throne of God! But it cannot be! God is supreme, man is dependent. And whatever is accomplished towards the melioration of our earthly condition—towards our

deliverance from temporal calamities—or towards our eternal salvation, is accomplished by the help of the Lord! Does the golden abundance of the rolling year crown the labours of the husbandman? He must gratefully acknowledge that—not to his own efforts, but to the power of Him, who sends the circling seasons, the refreshing showers, the genial sunshine, and the fructifying energy, belongs the praise. Does victory come to the standard of the pious patriot, as he battles for the right! Not to his own prowess, but to the God of battles he ascribes the glory. Does the pardoned sinner rejoice in the hope of the glory of God—the language of his heart and lips is, “grace—grace unto it!” Thine, O Lord, is the power, and thine be the glory for ever! Does the believer look back along the meandering path of life, by which the Lord has led him, recalling with mingled emotions of humiliation and gratitude, his first deliverance from the Egypt of sin, and his successive wanderings and returns, temptations and deliverances; to a covenant keeping God will he joyfully ascribe his whole redemption. And does the Church recapitulate the wondrous details of her wondrous history—her marvellous preservation from age to age—her vast extension and increase, and her numberless rescues from threatened destruction; her song will still be that of Samuel and of Israel, “Hitherto hath the Lord helped us!”

2d. The *duty* inculcated in the text is, that of *acknowledging* the truth of the doctrine, and gratefully commemorating God’s goodness. The duty is a corol-

lary of the doctrine; for if it be true, that a chain of dependence binds us to the throne of God, and that from this beneficent King “cometh every good and every perfect gift,” the duty of *gratitude*, and its appropriate utterance, follows of course. The natural promptings of the heart, too, enforce this duty. It is *natural* to love a benefactor, and nature prompts to express our gratitude. And if this be true in regard to created benefactors, how much more intense and constant should be our thanks to Him who is the Fountain of all good! Reason and nature, then—dim as reason is, and debased as is nature, in fallen man—combine to enforce the duty of gratefully commemorating the benefactions of the Lord!

And the example of the inspired prophet, and of the Church to which he ministered, recorded with evident approval, and for our instruction, enjoins the same delightful duty. Instead of exulting in their own achievements, and boasting of their own prowess in arms, they seemed absorbed in another and a holier sentiment—gratitude to God, under the conviction that to him only they owed the victory. They therefore form no triumphal procession, to display the pride of conquest; no captured banners are flung to the breeze; no prisoners in chains are dragged at the victor’s chariot-wheels; no praise is lavished upon particular leaders, or particular bands; but with devout and unaffected gratitude, they erect a simple monument of the Divine deliverance, name it Ebenezer—stone of help—and, ascribing unto God all the glory of this and of their former triumphs, they ac-

knowledge, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." Such ought to be the feeling and the conduct of all who share God's bounty here below, or who expect, through his grace, a glorious immortality.

But it is not my purpose to dwell either upon the *doctrine* or the *duty* enforced in the text; enough for our present purpose has already been said. I cannot believe that any of my present audience need arguments to establish either; and that both are in harmony with the occasion of the present assemblage, all must feel.

We have met to commemorate the jubilee of the pastorate of our venerable and beloved father, and to join with him and his beloved flock in the inauguration of their Ebenezer. They feel, and are disposed gratefully to acknowledge, that "hitherto the Lord hath helped them;" and they have invited the Presbytery, under the care of which they have been from the earliest days of their existence as a church, and with which their own history has been so long and so pleasantly identified, to share in the pleasant reminiscences, the hallowed sympathies, and the grateful utterances of the occasion. Except as an Ebenezer—a grateful acknowledgment of God's loving kindness—I know our venerable brother would have shrunk entirely from the demonstration. Indeed, it was with reluctance he yielded to the wishes of his flock, to observe this semi-centenary. "It came upon me by surprise," said he, in a note to the speaker; "I would have arrested the whole thing, if it had been subject to my control; and would have preferred

to let the fiftieth year pass as others have done. I am unworthy of having such an ado about me." There spoke the frank humility of a Christian heart; and we honour this shrinking from ostentation. But when it is proposed to take a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, between Bellefonte and Lick Run, "and call the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us," I know our venerable brother will exhibit no hesitation; but, with a heart glowing with gratitude to God, will be forward in the inauguration. This is what his attached flock desire to do; and, whilst they cannot repress the utterance of a sentiment of veneration and affection for his person, that has been growing with their growth, and strengthening with their strength, since the days of their childhood; it is to the Master, and not to the servant, they ascribe all the glory; and whilst grateful for a long, and kind, and faithful pastorate, and its many blessings and comforts, the words with which they would inaugurate their Ebenezer are, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us!"

The relation between a pastor and a people is perhaps the most solemn, and is one of the most tender that is ever formed on earth. Out of this relation grow duties and responsibilities solemn as death—awful as eternity! Its offices exert an influence that is widely and deeply felt on earth, and that extends to the eternal world; an influence that tells upon the destiny of souls, either amid the radiant glories of the upper sanctuary, or the lurid flames of Tophet. Other relations affect the life that now is; this one

affects both the present and the eternal future. Other ties, such as nature's hand hath woven, are tender and important in their issues; but this is a golden chain, formed by the God of grace, that links together immortal beings, in a common and a glorious cause; and that cause laden with the interests of an eternal life! Even when of brief duration, the union between pastor and flock is tender in its nature, and solemn in its issues. But when it lasts for many years, and extends, as in the case of this pastorate, over more than one generation, its tenderness becomes increased, and it grows in all the elements of affecting interest, in the ratio of its duration. The strength of that mutual affection, which is at once an element of usefulness and of comfort, increases with the lapse of years, and with the repetition of those kindly offices, which pertain to the pastor on the one hand, and to the flock on the other. The faithful and affectionate discharge of mutual duties fosters mutual confidence and love. The members of the flock become habituated to associate, not only the office, but the person also of the pastor, with all their most hallowed and tender memories, duties, and enjoyments. His venerated form stands prominent in all the most cherished pictures of the past. Scarce a group can be sketched, in the memory-painting of by-gone scenes, from which that form can be excluded. Is it the merry marriage gathering, where cheerful smiles, and genial mirth, and happy greetings, and buoyant hopes rule the hour? The pastor is there; for loving hearts have sought the offices of the minister of God, to sanction

their life-long union. Is it the chamber of sickness and of suffering, where loved ones languish—where sympathizing friends and anxious relatives gather, like ministering angels, around the couch of pain, and the muffled tread, and the anxious eye, and the whispered word, betoken the deep but unuttered solitude! The pastor is there—there with words of comfort and encouragement—there to point to the heavenly Physician—there to promote the sanctification of sorrow—there to whisper of the peace which is found only in atoning blood—there to lead the sufferer and his friends to a throne of grace, that the prayer of faith may save the sick. Is it the chamber of the dying? Do weeping kindred and friends stand around the death-bed, waiting, in their silent woe, for the dreaded moment when that ebbing pulse shall cease to beat, that fainting bosom rise and fall no more, that shortening breath be drawn no longer, that once bright eye be closed in death, that cherished form lie motionless, and that immortal spirit shall be absent from the body, and present with the Lord? The pastor is there—has been often there. There to speak of atoning blood—there to tell of free forgiveness and justification—there to invite and encourage the dying to behold the Lamb of God—there to tell how the sting of death may be removed, and the victory snatched from the grave—there to guard the dying against false hopes, to resolve doubts, to remove difficulties, and to cheer with hopes of immortality—there to commit, in solemn, fervent prayer, to Him who is the resurrection and the life,

the eternal interests of the dying. Is it the house of mourning, and the solemn funeral assemblage? Do the wail of the widow, and the tears of the orphan, or the anguish of bereaved parents, and brothers, and sisters, and kindred, and friends, spread sadness from heart to heart, in the throng of sympathizing neighbours; and do the coffin, and the sable pall, and the sombre funeral weeds, and the mournfully sounding knell, combine to intensify the sadness of the scene? The pastor is there; there to "weep with them that weep," to comfort the mourner, by applying the balm of Gilead to wounded hearts—to improve the instance of mortality for the benefit of the living—there to speak of Jesus and the resurrection—there to dry the falling tear, and to consign the precious dust to the shelter of the grave!

Or does memory recall group after group of the more ordinary scenes in the routine of pastoral and social life? In each of these the pious and affectionate parishioner will recognize the pastor's presence and position. In the social reunion; in the pastoral visit to the family, where, by the domestic hearth and altar, the gospel is tenderly and plainly presented, the claims of duty urged, the catechetical lesson imparted, and solemn and special prayer offered for parents and children. In the baptismal scene, where offspring is engaged to God, and sealed with the symbol of his Spirit; at the sacramental table; in the pulpit, in presence of the great congregation; in the Sabbath-school; in the social prayer-meeting; in the private personal interview, where counsel or

needed reproof is kindly, perhaps tearfully given—in every scene of life that is most worth remembering, the pastor is there!

The ties, therefore, which bind a pastor to his flock, and the flock to him, are cumulative in number, in strength, and in tenderness. When the relation is wisely and successfully maintained, the affections of a people become entwined around their pastor, like the tendrils of the vine round the tree to which it clings; and every year new tendrils are thrown out, whilst the old ones cling more closely—and, unlike the branches of the vine, they fall not when their supporter falls; for faith and affection follow the departed pastor to the paradise of God!

Brethren beloved, how manifold and how tender the ties that have been forming and strengthening between this pastor and this flock for fifty years! How thrilling must be the recollections of so long a union in so holy a relation! How melting must be many of the memories that, in an hour like this, come crowding upon the mind of both pastor and flock! How varied the scenes of sorrow and joy, of prosperity and adversity, of trial and deliverance, of sombre discouragement and exultant hope, that make up the drama of the past half-century, in which this people and their pastor have been unostentatious but useful actors! And, O how fraught with eternal results, both glorious and appalling, must this long and faithful pastorate have proved! Could I rend aside that veil which Mercy's hand hath woven—the veil that hides the spirit land from mortal gaze, and per-

mit you to behold in glory the hundreds, and perhaps thousands, that have been converted to God, or aided on their heaven-ward way by the ministrations of this venerable pastor; and also to gaze upon the other thousands that, under these same ministrations, hardened their hearts, rejected the gospel, and plunged into the eddies of the burning lake—then, methinks, you would all more profoundly appreciate the solemnities of the present occasion! Then all would feel that, in imitating the example of the great and good Samuel, this people have had good grounds for arranging the present solemnity.

The pastorate whose jubilee we this day commemorate has been one of quiet, unostentatious, patient continuance in well-doing. The stream that has so long made glad this part of the city of our God has been one of calm, and steady, and equable flow. Not a torrent, now swollen, and turbid, and foaming—now lost among the rugged rocks, leaving its channel parched and dry—but a bright, pure, gentle, and unfailing rivulet, like your own Bellefonte, gushing steadily from the riven rock, and gliding “through the valley of Baca, making it a well, and its water also filling the pools.” If the river of life, as it has flowed onward through your midst, by the space of this fifty years, has plunged over no cataracts, and formed no foaming whirlpools, its waters have been all the clearer, more refreshing and salutary; and herein is matter for gratitude. “The good shepherd maketh his flock to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth them beside the *still* waters.”

The long continuance of this pastorate is a worthy subject of sincere gratulation. In a country and an age marked by such perpetual flux and mutation, such a state of things as has existed between this congregation and their minister is as rare as it is lovely. Very pleasant to the pastor, very pleasant to the flock, must be the retrospect of so long and so happy a union! The occurrence of the semi-centenary of the pastoral office in the same congregation, is an event well worthy of an Ebenezer. Well may this minister and his people, as they review the lengthened and the varied past of their joint history, unite in exclaiming, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us!"

And there seems to your speaker a beautiful propriety in asking this venerable Presbytery to share in the solemnities of this occasion: for the history of Father Linn is the history of this Presbytery for the last half-century—almost the entirety of its existence. In view of the progress of the Presbytery in the number of its ministers; in the number and comparative strength and efficiency of its churches; and in all the elements of usefulness in the service of our Church and our country, it becometh the members of this body to erect an Ebenezer and say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." Fifty years ago this Presbytery was but fourteen years old, having been formed by the Synod of Philadelphia, chiefly out of the Presbytery of Carlisle, in the year 1795. Fifty years ago it consisted of eight ministers and of twenty churches; and these composed of scattered settlers, who were still struggling with the perils and hardships of frontier life

and comparatively new settlements. Now it consists of thirty-five ministers and forty-four churches. Fifty years ago, not one of the twenty churches was sufficiently strong to support a pastor, without being united with another congregation. Now, nineteen have preaching every Sabbath; and many of the others are sufficiently strong to support a pastor all the time; whilst nearly all are in the enjoyment of regular gospel ministrations. And when we consider the progress that has been made in church-building; in missionary and education and other contributions; in the establishment of schools and academies; and in all the elements of church efficiency: and when to this we add the gracious tokens of God's favour in many blessed revivals of religion, we will find great reason to set up a stone, and call it "*Ebenezer*: saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us!"

"The kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation." The achievements of the Church, unlike the march of military hosts, or the advance of material improvements, are not so obvious to public notice. You may trace the march of an army by the devastation it leaves behind it; or the carnage with which it strews the battle-field. You can mark the progress of material improvements, by the recession of the forest, the change of the wilderness to a fruitful field, the rise of villages, and cities, and rural dwellings; the thunder roll of the rail-train; the smoke of the furnace and the forge; the rattle and clang of the factory; the wide-spread hum of industry, and a thousand visible and audible mementoes of physical pro-

gress. But the onward progress of the Church of God is not thus distinguishable. Her battles are not waged "with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood." She rears no material monuments to mark her advance, except the modest schoolhouse, and the unostentatious house of worship. Her march is noiseless as an angel's flight; and his work is done without the clatter and the glare that challenge notoriety. And yet upon her progress depends the progress of all that is valuable in civilization and the arts. Upon her work is dependent the safety, the stability, and the value of all material improvements. Working silently, but with an energy divine, the Church moulds the characters of men, and of society. She inculcates those principles, and inspires those hopes, which in their outgrowth produce in individuals, and in society, all the elements of usefulness and valuable progress. Without the Church and the Christian religion, civil society would be either like an engine without steam, or like an engine in rapid and terrible motion, but without an engineer to regulate its motions, or arrest its impetuous career. Without religion, society would either stand still, or rush to ruin. But men of superficial views are slow to perceive, and men of worldly sentiments are slow to acknowledge the indebtedness of our country to the Christian religion. Yet it is demonstrably true, that, but for the life-power that religion has furnished for their civilization, our commonwealth and our country would never have been what they are. What would the country bordering on the Juniata and its tributaries

be without the Christian religion? And how much of its most valuable and substantial Christianity has resulted from the toils and trials, and faith, and patience, and prayers of the Presbytery of Huntingdon? If it were possible to withdraw from the territory and the population of our presbyterial bounds all the agencies and influences for good, and their resultant benefits, that this body during its entire history has operated, what a change would pass over the smiling and prosperous aspect of these lovely hills and vallies! The fathers of this Presbytery were the pioneers of religion and civilization in all this picturesque, lovely, and prosperous region; and it is not arrogating too much to assert, that to those faithful and self-denying men, and their successors, central Pennsylvania owes more than to any other agency for good. Hither they came, when as yet the howl of the panther and the wolf, and the still more appalling war-whoop of the savage echoed through these mountains and vallies. Here they dwelt in the lowly cabin, hard by the wigwam of the Indian; and here, amid privations and dangers, that might appal the stoutest heart, they sowed that precious seed, of which succeeding generations are reaping the pleasant fruit. Embalmed in our holiest memories be their names—in the grateful hearts of their children and successors be the record of their toils and trials; and, as we this day contemplate the fair and growing proportions of that temple, whose foundations were laid in their tears and prayers, let us give God the glory, and set up

our "Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us!"

My beloved and venerable father and friend, what mingled emotions, joyous and sad—pleasant, yet mournful, is the present occasion, with all its thrilling associations, calculated to awaken in your bosom! What changes have you witnessed and survived during the last half-century! Changes in the great world, with its empires, and nations, and cities, and heaving agitations and rushing generations; changes in your country; changes in your church; changes in your Presbytery; changes in the beloved flock over which you have been so long overseer; changes in your own dear family; changes in yourself. When first you trod these hills and dales the flush of youth was on your cheek—your youthful pulse beat full and strong, and the light of early manhood kindled in your eye. Now—now you are "such an one as Paul the aged." Generations of men have passed away since first you entered this field of your life-labours. Where are the hands that grasped yours on the day of your ordination, in token of cordial reception as their pastor? Those of the venerable Lowrey and Williams only feel the slow pulse-throbs of lingering life; and the first is far away, the last only is by your side; all the rest lie mouldering in the grave. Where are the hands that were laid upon your youthful head in that solemn hour when you were set apart to the holy office? All nerveless in the tomb! Where are the men who, fifty years ago, constituted this Presbytery, and shared with you in counsel and in

labour? Where are Wilson, your predecessor, Stephens, and Baird, and Stuart, and the Johnstons, and Coulter, and Hutchinson, and Galbreath, and Kennedy, and Boyd and Thompson? All fallen before the stroke of death, like trees before the tornado; and you are left standing, like a solitary oak, where a forest once had stood! "The fashion of this world passeth away;" and you have told us that you this day realize the mournful truth in the retrospect of the past half-century. When you repair to yonder graveyard, and try to number the sleepers there who have passed from life during your ministry; when you think of the thousands of your acquaintances, in the bounds of this Presbytery, who have preceded you to the eternal world; and when you look abroad over the Presbyterian Church, and inquire how many of those who constituted her ministry when you entered the holy office, are still alive, it must profoundly impress you, as it ought to impress us all, with the vanity and mutation of all that belongs to earth. And yet it is all well—all right; it is our Father's will; and with all that is tenderly mournful in the reminiscences of the past, you have very much over which to rejoice and be thankful. And we feel sure, that in this interesting hour, and in view of your long, pleasant and useful pastorate, and the many blessings, private, social, and ministerial, which the Master has bestowed upon you, it is your heart's fervent wish to plant a memorial-stone, and call it "Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us!" Long may the God of the covenant continue your life and

strength to serve this flock and to counsel your brethren. And when, at last, your work is done, and your pilgrimage about to end,

“O! may your sun in smiles decline,  
And bring a pleasant night!”

Brethren of this congregation, permit me for myself, and in behalf of the Presbytery, to congratulate you upon that happy and kind Providence that has brought you to this day, and to these circumstances. We congratulate you in view of the fact that God has spared your beloved and venerated pastor to celebrate with you the fiftieth anniversary of the commencement of his labours amongst you. It is no small favour to a people that, instead of being annoyed by frequent changes, and distracted and divided by frequent elections, and wounded in their holiest sensibilities by the death, or otherwise removal of pastors, they are permitted to enjoy, from generation to generation, the uninterrupted labours of one trusted and beloved man. And it is no less a matter of congratulation that, in this age of excitement and fluctuation and unrest in the churches, when novices and novelties are sought, and when age and experience and wisdom and sedateness are at a discount, God has given you the good sense to appreciate, and the heart to cherish, and the grace to improve, the ministrations of an aged pastor.

There is something very lovely in the aspect of such a state of things as exists here. To behold the

generations that were born and grew up under a pastor's ministrations, and that enjoyed the benefits of his early and of his matured labours, still hanging reverently upon his aged lips, and with the affection of children, cherishing his declining years, and profiting by his latest counsels. In such a state of things, the expectation is reasonable that the pastor's *last* days will be his *best* days; and that the rich blessing which God has annexed to the fifth commandment, will come upon the people. Cherish him still, my brethren. Give good heed to his counsels. Ask God that the good seed he has so long sown amongst you may continue to grow and be fruitful; that his ministrations may yet be greatly blessed to the comfort and edification of believers, and the conversion of souls; and, as the frosts of age grow whiter on his brow, and his trembling steps draw nearer to the grave, let your love and veneration for his person find expression in increasing regard for his comfort, and in growing zeal for that blessed cause in which he has spent amongst you his life-long labours. And when at last the hour arrives—and come it must, when his cherished form will move amongst you no more, and no more appear in this sacred desk—when, with filial hands, and melting hearts, and streaming eyes, you lay that form in the lonely grave, you will have consolation in your sorrow. The memories of that hour, though mournful, will be pleasant; and your anticipations of meeting him at God's judgment-bar, and in the brighter world, will sweetly soothe the anguish of the parting hour.

And O, my brethren, that solemn thought—to meet a pastor at the judgment-bar! Under any circumstances, it is an anticipation fraught with solemnity. But a pastor of a life-time—a pastor whose instructions, and warnings, and entreaties, and persuasions, have sounded in our ears, and the ears of our fathers, for half a century—to meet *such* a pastor at the judgment, how momentous the anticipation! If he is to be a witness against you—if he shall there testify that he preached to you the gospel, and you rejected it; that he besought you to be reconciled to God, and ye would not; that he warned you of coming wrath, and ye regarded not—ah, if such shall be his testimony, how terrible! But if you shall meet your venerable pastor at the right hand of the Judge—to hear him say, as he presents you, robed in white, to your glorious Redeemer, “Here am I, and the souls committed to my care”—then will that meeting be replete with gladness and with glory; and thenceforward you will be permitted to renew, in a higher and a holier life, that sweet communion with your pastor, and with one another, which has so much comforted your earthly pilgrimage, and which shall continue to augment in closeness and in blessedness for ever and ever! Then shall you erect, upon the farther brink of Jordan—upon the shore of immortality—your final Ebenezer; and say, as you enter the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem, “Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.”

But, ah! shall there be missing from the ranks of the ransomed, on that great day, any members of this congregation! Shall any of you, by heedlessness, by

love of sin, by delay, or by unbelief, be found among the quailing ranks of God's enemies, to hear the dread sentence, "Depart, ye cursed"? God forbid! God forbid! And if any of you are still out of Christ, and in your sins, be entreated, on this solemn occasion, to believe in Christ, and be reconciled to God.

O how it would cheer and comfort the heart of your dear old pastor, if he could see all the wandering sheep and lambs of his flock safely in the fold, and in the arms of the great Shepherd. Then, like good old Simeon, he would be ready to exclaim, "Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation!"

Citizens of Bellefonte, it might be pleasant, did our time permit, to remind you of the manner and the measure in which the pastorate, the jubilee of which we celebrate, has been identified with the best interests and the progress of your community. It might be interesting to recur to some events in the history of your town and community, which the modesty of my venerable brother has perhaps prevented him from recording on the occasion—but time permits not; and we can only congratulate you upon the substantial progress you have made in the arts of civilization, and we trust, also, in the higher arts of piety and morality. How wonderful the change, since the Indian war-path wound along the banks of Spring Creek, and the Bald Eagle's nest\* was at its mouth! How different the aspect of this region now, from that it

\* The wigwam of an Indian of that name, built between two trees.

wore in 1768, when Andrew Boggs built the first cabin on the Bald Eagle Creek, near Milesburg! Not only in view of religious privilege and progress, but in view of advances in wealth, and all the elements of individual and social comfort, it becomes you to raise a monument of gratitude to God, saying, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us!"

And, my brethren of the Presbytery, are there not impressive lessons for us in the celebration in which we have been invited to participate? Ought we not to be devoutly thankful that our venerable brother has been so long spared to us and to his flock? And ought we not to learn, from the changes of which this occasion has reminded us, that our days and opportunities of usefulness are passing; and that soon we must follow those of our predecessors who have already gone to give an account of their stewardship. Few, perhaps none of us, will be permitted, like father Linn, to celebrate our semi-centenary. It is the very rarity of the event that has occasioned its celebration; and we ought all to be admonished by the fact, to do quickly and with our might what our hands find to do. Every meeting of our Presbytery brings us nearer to our final account. Every semi-annual statement we make of the state of religion in our churches, ought to remind us of the statement that will be called for at the judgment bar! Nor have we been without other admonitions that ought to reach our hearts. Changes are yearly occurring to remind us of our transient estate. Removals and death are perpetually changing the aspect of this body—the faith-

ful and earnest Betts, the gifted McGinnis, the learned and gentle Moore, the earnest and amiable Nourse, the lovely and beloved Peebles, and the youthful and devoted Morrison! How many of our fellow labourers and counsellors has the hand of death smitten down by our side, even within a very few years! O do not these mournful recollections seem to say, in solemn tones, "Work while it is called to day; the night cometh, in which no man can work!"

Brethren, our past history as a Presbytery is dotted with Ebenezers; hitherto the Lord hath helped us! Let each sweet Ebenezer be a stimulant to stronger faith *in* God, and harder work *for* God. Let us be encouraged and urged, by the reminiscences of this occasion, to fresh zeal and earnestness in our Master's cause. Let us be reminded that these gray heads *must* soon go down to the grave; that some of these younger heads *may* go before them; and let us so live, and pray, and watch, and labour, and strive, that when that hour draws near, we each may be able, with holy Paul, to say, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which God the righteous Judge will give me in that day; and not to me only only, but unto all them also that love his appearing!"<sup>2</sup> God, of his great grace, grant it—and His name have all the glory. AMEN!

THE END.