

**THE COURAGEOUS MINISTER,**

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**DR. WOODBRIDGE'S SERMON,**

AND

**Rev. Mr. Vail's Address**

**AT WARE.**

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Published by request of the Church and Society.

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**THE COURAGEOUS MINISTER.**

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A

**S E R M O N,**

PREACHED AT THE ORDINATION

OF THE

**REV. PARSONS COOKE.**

TO THE PASTORAL CARE OF THE EAST EVANGELICAL

CHURCH AND SOCIETY IN

**WARE;**

JUNE 21, 1826.



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## SERMON.



### JEREMIAH I. 17.

*Thou, therefore, gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee ; be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them.*

THE qualifications of the prophetic character, and the duties it implied, were, in some respects, peculiar. The messages of the prophets were dictated to them by immediate revelation ; amidst all the variety of useful subjects, on which they might have dwelt, they were not at liberty to exercise their judgment in a selection ; they were obliged to adhere, strictly, to their instructions ; and after they had once proved their inspiration, their testimony from the Lord was to be implicitly received by others, as his word. In many particulars, however, they are to be regarded as examples to the ordinary teachers of religion in every age. All christian ministers receive their authority from that God, who unrolled to Hebrew sages the hidden records of his decrees. Though uninspired themselves, they profess to derive their views of truth and duty, from an inspired volume ; this is written with

great clearness ; and it must be their own fault, if they essentially err in its interpretation. Since they are commanded to preach the word, it is certain, that it is in their power, by diligent study, and humble, persevering prayer, to determine with confidence what that word is, which it is their duty to urge upon the practical attention of mankind. The virtues also, by which the prophets were distinguished, are enjoined upon all the preachers of the gospel. It will not be questioned, I presume, but that the heralds of the cross now, need the same faith, candour, meekness, love to God, and benevolence to men, which were possessed by Elijah, Isaiah, Paul, and John.

In the passage before us, a virtue, which some, perhaps, would reckon scarcely compatible with those already mentioned, is strongly inculcated upon the prophet. This, however, viewed in connexion with other precepts, is but an example of the beautiful order and proportion, which are observable in the code of scriptural morality. No duty is overlooked. It is not by the possession of one class of virtues, but by a proper union of them all, that the good man of the Bible is formed, approved, and prepared for heaven. It is not improbable, that Jeremiah was constitutionally a diffident and timid man. After being informed of his appointment to the prophetic office, he was so affected at the thought of the difficulties and dangers, which would attend its fulfilment, that he earnestly begged to be excused from the service allotted him. "Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold I cannot speak, for I am a child." What he needed, was courage, and

to this, he was urged, in terms fitted at once to allay his fears, and to shame him for his timidity. "But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child, for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee, thou shalt speak." In the text, with the two following verses, the injunction is renewed; and he is required to discharge, boldly, the office assigned him, from a consideration of the consequences of a shrinking unfaithfulness, and with an assurance of divine protection and support, in a course of obedience. "Thou, therefore, gird up thy loins," be prepared for the labors and perils of thy ministry, "and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee; be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. For behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land. And they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee."

The duty of courage to every christian minister in the various labors of his office and, particularly, in preaching the gospel, is the subject, which the text naturally suggests; and, on this occasion, I enter upon it the more readily, as there is, I fear, an increasing disposition in the churches of New England, to overlook its importance. There was a time, when the necessity of great perspicuity, pungency and power, in proclaiming the truths of Christianity, was the frequent, and, perhaps I may say, the favourite theme of sermons at the ordination of young men to the work of the evangelical ministry. It has become however, far more

popular, I think, to dwell on the duty of prudence, affable manners, kindness, gentleness, and all the milder virtues; and also to guard, with scrupulous care, against every thing which may be construed into harshness, or betray a want of courtesy. I am not insensible to the value of any of these accomplishments. I know, and I would wish, at the outset to be explicit upon the subject, that they ought to be conspicuous in all our preaching, and in all our social intercourse with our people. I shall not, therefore, be misunderstood, when I say, that genuine courage is as important to a preacher as any of the amiable qualities, which have been enumerated; that, if this be wanting, they degenerate into weakness and pusillanimity; and are but spurious imitations of the virtues, for which they obtain credit and applause, in the circles of the unthinking gay, fashionable and polite. Thus insulated, they become allied with the pride of the human heart, and its enmity to the spiritual religion of Jesus, in denouncing, as indiscretion and uncharitableness, that very fidelity to God, which ensures in the highest degree, his approbation and the rewards he has promised to those, who "count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ." The time serving minister will, almost of course, stigmatize, with the name of imprudence that noble boldness, which he knows not how to imitate; and he, whose highest boast it is, that all are united and satisfied under his labors, will be sure to enlist himself, with an energy, he could hardly exert in any other cause, against the man, who, more afraid of displeasing Christ, than of offending his impenitent hear-

ers, has provoked their hostility by his faithfulness. In pursuing the subject before us, I shall

I. Show the nature and effects of that courage, which is required of every christian, and especially, of every christian minister ;

II. Show how it is to be attained ; and

III. Exhibit some considerations, to evince its importance.

I. *By courage, in the more common acceptation of the term, is understood that energy of mind and resolution, by which a man in prosecuting any object he deems worthy of his efforts, readily encounters and persists in encountering, to the last extremity, all the dangers and hardships, necessary to its attainment.* While it avoids needless exposure, it promptly meets terrors of every form, and death itself rather than relinquish its object. As a quality of wordly men, it depends rather on their physical constitution, and the circumstances of their education, than on any principles, or habits of a moral kind ; and its highest exertions are nothing more than the darings of intellectual strength, or the unrestrained ebullitions of ambition. Christian courage must be distinguished from this ; for though it may attach itself most readily, to a mind, originally vigorous, and steadfast to its purpose, yet it may exist, and reach its sublimest perfection in minds which, naturally, are most of the opposite character. The most delicate females and children have dared, in the very face of persecution to stand forth witnesses for the truth, and to seal their

testimony by their blood, as often as men of the hardest spirit, used, from their earliest years, to the din of arms, and to all the desperate conflicts of battle.

Christian courage differs, entirely, from that boldness which is produced by party feelings, and is sustained by the cheering aid, or the applauses of the party, in whose behalf its enterprise, and its energies are displayed. The evangelical hero aims at the interests of no party, but that of truth, purity and holiness ; and if duty call, he will disoblige his religious friends, to whom next to his Redeemer, he looks for support, as readily as those, who oppose him from avowed hostility to the doctrines he preaches. He humors the corrupt prejudices, and spares the sins of his orthodox brethren, as little as those of the open enemies of the gospel. He acts so far superior to all human opinions, predilections and interests, that he makes the Bible, whatever to him, personally, may be the consequences of his rigid adherence to its instructions, the actual and only rule of his belief and practice.

He forms his religious sentiments, from examination and evidence : he dares, in this respect, to judge independently of any earthly authority, associations, and the influence of great names, and to rest, implicitly, his whole creed on the simple testimony of Revelation. What the learned and the good have generally received as truth, he will indeed, be slow to reject ; and far will he be *O, how far!*—from that pert decision, which would assume to itself the credit of superior wisdom, by hastily throwing aside, as trash and extravagance, opinions, sanctioned by the erudition, vir-

tue and piety of ages. It is not in the schools of the loquacious and boastful, that he would hope to learn the nature of that divine religion, whose first lesson is—*humility*. It is, however, his fixed determination, whatever system they may contradict and whomsoever they may offend, to abide by the decisions of the Bible. This book, aware of the omniscient eye that is upon him, knowing that he must answer for his religious opinions at the tribunal of Heaven, and willing to submit his understanding to a divine guidance,—he studies, earnestly, on his knees; and what he there finds, though accounted foolishness by men, he eagerly and boldly grasps, as the strong anchor of his salvation.

What he believes, the courageous christian minister hesitates not to avow, and to publish. It is not his inquiry, “What will be most acceptable to my hearers?” but “What saith the Lord? and how shall I most effectually please Him, whose ambassador I am, and save the souls, he has committed to my care?”

The holy independence, with which he forms his opinions, will manifest itself, not only in his choice of subjects, but in his manner of treating them, in the general arrangement of his thoughts, in his diction, and, I had almost said, in the very inflections of his voice, attitude, air and gesture. Such a man throws around himself a halo of moral grandeur, which no art can copy, and upon which, the servile sycophant, who cringes for favor and his living, cannot look without terror. He does not, under the pretence of prudence and gentleness, so soften the terms of his message, that its point cannot be felt; nor, from the empty ambition of rhetori-

cal prettiness, does he so cover it with ornaments, that only an occasional glimpse of the real colors and features of truth, can be caught through the thickness and glitter of its drapery. He will study, first of all, to be intelligible. Next to perspicuity, his aim will be to adopt that energetic and penetrating mode of expression, which shall give to all he says, the impression of vivid reality, and deep earnestness. Whether his subject be tender or terrible, he will call things by their right names; like Elihu, he will know not to give flattering titles; and he will so apply his discourses, that every attentive hearer will feel his inmost soul searched, as with the candle of the Lord. He will learn to rebuke with authority, as well as meekness; and to thunder on the guilty, with the emphatic and appalling address of the prophet, "Thou art the man." It is possible to preach even the truth as it is in Jesus, with such faltering timidity and indecision, that its enemies shall feel themselves complimented by the homage, which is thus paid to their vanity, and be led to the conclusion, that the preacher himself does not more than half believe the gospel he proclaims. There is indeed a "weakness, and fear and much trembling," which well become the man, who speaks for eternity, to beings, born and living for eternity. But what is this? Certainly not that affected delicacy of delivery, and excessive caution in the selection of phrases, which so weaken the gospel, as to make it scarcely less impotent, to all the purposes of human salvation, than gross error itself. Give me rather, coarseness, vulgarity, *any thing with sterling honesty*—than the soft sentences, soft accents, soft

simper of him, who stands up, in the character of a legate from the skies, to court, to sooth, to *satisfy* an ungodly world. Courage imparts to the preacher other tones, and arms him with words of greater power. He comes to his people with the solemnity and authority of one, who has seen God, and the last tribunal, and the joys of heaven, and the insufferable agonies of hell.

By courage, he is enabled, regardless of personal consequences, to persevere in his course of faithfulness, to the end. He has not acted without deliberation ; he has counted the cost ; he is prepared for every sacrifice. If men object, and hate him, and cry, " Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live ;" he continues undaunted ; and, to all the expostulations of his misjudging friends, as well as to the reproaches of his enemies, he replies with the apostle, " Necessity is laid upon me ; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel." This imperious conviction of duty, this vehement urgency in his labors, would remain, unabated,—I do not say merely, in prospect of desertion by those he loves, and all the evils of poverty,—but in sight of whips, and dungeons, and chains and racks, and fires. Persecution may quench the vital spark within him ; but it cannot break down, it cannot fetter that lofty spirit, which fixes its eye on heaven, and stretches all its wings to reach the abodes of the blessed. I am to show

## II. How this courage is to be attained.

### 1. *By a rational and firm conviction of the truth*

*and divinity of the gospel.* “I believed, therefore have I spoken.” If any doubts exist, relative to the heavenly origin and authority of Christianity, there must be, in the same proportion, a hesitancy and inconsistency in our mode of instruction, and a shrinking from the dangers, to which faithfulness would expose us. Why should a man hazard his present peace and happiness, by defending, with zeal, and in opposition to the feelings of the unholy, a religion, whose claims to the homage and obedience of human beings, are, after all, of a questionable character? The gospel, doubtless, has sometimes been exhibited in a weak and distorted light, and accommodated to the caprices of mankind, from the influence of a secret infidelity in its preachers. It is easy to be gentle and conciliatory, in maintaining a cause, which we ourselves distrust, and in which we feel little interest. It is easy to acquire the reputation of candour and charity, without possessing in any degree the virtues these words are designed to represent, in a case, where our understanding in a great measure, and our hearts wholly, are with those, whose character and views we must, professionally, oppose. It is of the last importance then, that the christian minister should make himself acquainted with the deep and immoveable foundations, on which the gospel rests. Let him study its miracles, its prophecies, its collateral proofs; let him contemplate the sublimity of its discoveries, the grandeur of its sanctions, its adaptation to our wants, the harmony of its design, and the lustre it reflects on the character and ways of the Eternal,—noticing, if he have leisure, the contemptible weakness, little-

ness and folly of the objections, by which enemies have labored to overthrow it; let him pursue the course candidly, seriously, perseveringly;—and every cloud of suspicion and doubt, that had rested upon his mind, will be chased away, and, exulting in the clear sunshine of truth, he will join with Peter in the noble confession, “We believe, and are sure, that thou art that Christ, the Saviour of the world.” How can he be afraid to preach with plainness, that gospel, which he sees supported by all the strength of Omnipotence? How can that warrior be dismayed, who fights under the banners of the Almighty, and is clad in the refulgent armory of heaven?

2. *By a knowledge and full belief of the particular doctrines, which the gospel reveals.* Much, that is misnamed charity and moderation in preachers, by which they ingratiate themselves into the favour of those who are most loud in their denunciations against bigotry and intolerance, results from the want of a thorough persuasion of the truth of these doctrines. Inattention to the Bible, the cavils ostensibly grounded on sacred criticism, or philosophy, and the apparent seriousness of some, who deny the Lord that bought them, all conspire to produce in minds, of the cast to which I refer, a state of painful suspense, if not of absolute doubt, respecting the nature of the gospel, and to occasion obscurity and reserve in the publication of its offensive peculiarities. It is not to be expected, that a man will inculcate plainly, at the hazard of his quiet and dearest worldly interests, truths, of which he is not so

far convinced, as to regard the practical admission of them by his hearers of any vital importance to their present and eternal happiness. He, however, who espouses with assured confidence what he professes to believe, will be likely to avow his tenets, with an unambiguous directness, and an air of sincerity, confounding to the enemies of religion, and worthy of a cause that never courts concealment, and appears the more venerable, the more it is known.

Let the preacher then, understand the great principles of the christian faith, and adhere to them, without wavering. Uncertainty concerning them, in one who has had access from his childhood to the lively Oracles, is unnecessary and inexcusable. Every human treatise on ethicks, or philosophy, has its first principles; and it is no little reflection on the wisdom of God, to suppose, that the book, which has been written by his inspiration, is so loose and uncertain in its statements, that it is not in the power of men, with whatever uprightness of motive, and diligence of research, they may apply themselves to the study of truth, to come to any satisfying conclusion, in relation to the general features of the system, it reveals. The gospel is not, it cannot be an incoherent collection of contradictory dogmas, so adapting itself to the particular tastes and prejudices of men, that it can be made, by the rules of fair interpretation, to support any creed, which any one may happen to prefer. Admit that it proceeded from a God of intelligence, who sees the end from the beginning, and you must also allow, that it teaches a system, and that this system is but one.

Nor is an immensity of learning requisite, to enable us to comprehend the leading object of that religion, which proclaims *liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound*. Whatever may be said of different interpretations of the sacred text, and whatever ingenuity may be evinced in supporting them,—the Bible claims to be, in all that relates to man's salvation, so intelligible, as to leave the contentious and disobedient of every class, without excuse. It professes to be “a light to them that sit in darkness. The meek will *God* guide in judgment, the meek will he teach his way. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine.” By erroneous expositions, subversive of the scheme of human redemption, revealed in the gospel, men, instead of being commended, or justified, for the purity of their intentions, are said to *wrest* the scriptures to their own *destruction*.

But a rational conviction will not be sufficient, unless

3. *There is superadded that experimental and practical knowledge of the gospel, which is the result of a new creation to holiness, by the power of the Spirit of God.* Experience is, in all instances, the best teacher: and the lessons it inculcates, cannot be easily effaced from the mind. He, who has seen the luminary of day in its glory, can never be led, by the ingenious sophistry of a blind man, to question the reality of light, colors, and the various phenomena, which depend on the laws of vision. Nor can he, who has discovered,

by faith, the divine beauty of the gospel, and felt its transforming influence on his heart, be ever driven, or drawn aside, from his principles, by the boast of superior penetration, supercilious sneers, strange and difficult names, learned and pompous words, abstruse speculations, flattery, or any of those imposing pretensions which are styled by the apostle, "the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." Armed in "panoply complete," he quenches all the fiery darts of the wicked; and, summoning eternal might to his aid, he puts to flight the armies of the aliens.

In the same proportion, as that piety, which loves the truth, and builds upon it all its hopes for eternity, is real, vigorous and influential, its effects, on the life, and on the labors of the pulpit, will be visible; and it will manifest itself as well by great plainness and boldness in preaching, as by an inimitable tenderness of spirit, and unwearied vigilance in the humbler duties of the ministry. He, who prays most frequently and fervently, loves God and his cause most strongly, and embraces the divine testimony most cordially, will be the last man to surrender his faith or stand aghast, in the presence of scoffers, and the enemies of the Redeemer. "The wicked flee, when no man pursueth; but the righteous are as bold as a lion." To the devoted minister, nothing is so dear as his religion; and no evil is so much dreaded, as the frown of his Judge. Human applauses, and the displeasure of mortals!—what are they to him, who sees himself and his people, standing on the brink of eternity, and who would carry the

whole world with him into heaven? If he can have peace of conscience, if he can honor his Saviour, if he can help to people the celestial mansions, he is satisfied; but if he fail here, not the wealth of the Indies, not the loudest trumpet of fame, can send to his heart one emotion of coveted joy. This, my brethren, is the man, whom no opposition can intimidate; and who would continue to preach the gospel with unabated zeal, though all earth and hell should arise, to awe him into silence. “O God, my heart is fixed. I will speak of thy testimonies before kings, and will not be ashamed.”

Place yourselves then, at the feet of Jesus, and imbibe his spirit, if you would learn to be “valiant for the truth upon the earth.” I am

III. To exhibit some considerations, to evince the importance of christian courage to every minister of the gospel. Here I observe

1. That every christian should be ready to die, and to suffer every evil, to which he may be called in Providence, for the religion he has professed. Our divine Master has not deceived us, on a point so important. He has plainly taught us, that such self-denial is necessary to the character of his disciples. “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it. If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and

children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also, before my Father, which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels." And are moral qualifications, inferior to those which are required of common christians, sufficient for him, whose office it is to guide immortal beings to glory? Must they be ready to forsake all they have, to spill their very blood for Christ; and shall such a man as he be afraid, if but a threatening word be given by some proud Goliath, or but the sound of commotion be heard from the camp of the enemy? Shall he *then* break the point of his sword? or bury it in its sheath? or succumb to the foe? or seek his own safety, by betraying the cause of his Sovereign? And can he hope, that this injured Sovereign will not resent the wrong? He dares not incense a worm;—has he no fears of that Almighty vengeance, which already lowers in the heavens?

2. This courage is expressly enjoined upon the ambassadors of Christ to guilty men. I might refer you for proof to the commands of God to the prophets: for, as I have already observed, the virtues which were needful to them, are required of us. Though we cannot pretend to inspiration, yet we have in the Bible

instructions, no less clear and definite than were those communicated to inspired men; and, if we are the real ministers of Christ, we act under as high authority as did the prophets and apostles. It is the Holy Ghost, who has constituted us overseers of the flock of God. "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore, hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from *me*. The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully; what is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." "Speak unto them," says God in the text, "all that I command thee; be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. And thou son of man," said the most High to Ezekiel, "be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns be with thee, and though thou dost dwell among scorpions; be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house. And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear; for they are most rebellious. Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces; and thy forehead strong against their foreheads. As an adamant, harder than flint, have I made thy forehead; fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house." No man, who does not deny the divine authority of the christian religion, and the divine institution of its ministry, can say, that a preacher of the gospel is not as much bound, as was Ezekiel the prophet, to declare, fearlessly, his message from the

Lord. Christ himself has said to his servants, "Fear not them which kill the body; but rather fear him, which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Certainly then, ministers ought not to be afraid of such as can do no more than hate, slander, and refuse to hear them. Common christians are commanded to be nothing terrified by their adversaries; and to contend earnestly for the faith, which was once delivered to the saints. And shall the messengers of the Lord of hosts to his people, turn pale with fear? Will they disobey God, rather than displease an unholy world?

3. Without courage, the duties of the christian ministry cannot be well and faithfully performed.

From the language of some men, we should infer, that Christianity and intellectual refinement have produced an essential change in the character of unregenerate sinners; that among us, none can be found, who actually hate evangelical goodness; that it is not possible any one, at this day, should be persecuted for righteousness sake; and that, if a minister of the gospel is opposed and reviled, the reason must be, that he fails to unite, in his intercourse with mankind, the wisdom of the serpent, with the harmlessness of the dove. Alas! all this is but the dream of a visionary, or the soothing song of a pleasure-loving pastor, who cries, "*Peace, peace.*" It ought to be remembered, that, of all the true prophets, and faithful teachers, of whom the scriptures give us an account, not one escaped persecution. Our Saviour was not mistaken, when he said, "Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when

they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy ; for, behold your reward is great in heaven : for in *the like manner, did their fathers unto the prophets.* Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you ! for *so did their fathers to the false prophets.*" It is vain to disguise the matter. Whatever the timid minister may say, who would quiet his conscience, while he withholds from his people the truths that might save them ; it is certain, that the unrenewed heart is now, as really as it was in ancient times, "deceitful above all things, desperately wicked, and enmity against God." It is as true now, as it ever was, that "they who are in the flesh cannot please God," and that they, who are unreconciled to his law, will be dissatisfied under such preaching, as is best adapted to produce in their minds conviction of sin, and alarm.

Are our hearers nominal christians ? Are their consciences, and all their prejudices, on the side of the gospel ? *Be it so.* Nominal christians are the very persons, of whom it is declared, that they *will not endure sound doctrine.* Nominal christians were the most bitter enemies of the apostles. Certainly it cannot be pretended, that a false Christianity is less prevalent now than it was in the primitive days of the gospel, when against it, were arrayed the bigotry, and long established superstition, and wit, and science, and wealth of the world. That prudence, which could not screen apostles from the rage of the wicked, will not, of course afford an impenetrable shield to any faithful minister. A

man must be humbled by grace to the obedience of the faith, ere he will approve from the heart, of that fidelity in preaching, which Christ has enjoined, and of which he has left us an example. Besides; the present day is peculiarly a time of peril, as well as of high achievement. While the conquests of the cross are multiplied abroad, the enemies of our Jesus at home are seen collecting their forces, and arraying their hosts for the conflict. Bloated by the consciousness of wealth and power, with great, swelling words of vanity, they threaten the tranquillity, if not the life, of every man who dares to lift up his voice with strength, and sound the alarm from the holy mountain of God. Him, who is silent, they will honor with their kind words and civilities. They care not what we think, if we will but disguise our sentiments, and pay our court to the advocates of error. They will embrace us the more warmly, if, wearing the livery of the friends of truth, we carry in our bosom, a traitor's heart. It does require courage, to take our stand; and to show ourselves ready for its defence, whatever may befall us. It does require courage, to preach what we believe will offend those, from whom we may have received expressions of kindness, who are high in station or in influence, and who know full well the extent of our weakness, and dependence on their friendship, for support. We shall be tempted to palliate, or conceal the more repulsive features of the system, which, whoever may be displeased, we are sworn to exhibit, in all its majestic proportions, and divine simplicity. In prospect of neglect, reproach and poverty, thousands of mild and peace-

able men have felt all their resolution die within them. They could not be torn from those, they loved. They would yield to the wishes of designing and wealthy sinners, for the enviable privilege of living in peace, and dying at last in the arms of an affectionate people.

None but a hero can be faithful. Aspire not, ye timid ones, to the honor of a station so perilous. Choose any occupation, rather than the holy ministry. Follow the flock, or turn the glebe, or throw the shuttle, or trim the lamp of science, or gather the laurels of legislative fame ; but leave to others, of higher aims and bolder hearts, the front of danger and of battle, in the war that Christ has proclaimed “ against principalities, and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness in high places.”

It may seem almost superfluous to remark

4. That courage in a minister, is necessary to his usefulness.

It is a fact, according, I think, with common observation, that, whatever evils may result from the inexperience of young preachers, they are in general more successful than at any later period of their life, in promoting the conversion of sinners. One reason may be, that men in their youth, if they have less prudence, are commonly more distinguished for their courage, than in their more advanced years ; and it is not to be denied, that timidity naturally increases with age. True courage, I hesitate not to affirm, is the very quality, which, most of all, God has been pleased to acknowledge and to bless, in weakening the empire of darkness, and ex-

tending the limits of his own holy kingdom. It is better than all the gifts of learning and eloquence, united with a weak and irresolute soul.

We may always remark, that even the fearful minister waxes bold, whenever his instrumentality is to be honored by any unusual additions to the ranks of the redeemed.

Courage was not the least of those graces, which were bestowed upon the apostles, to fit them for the arduous labors, and the glorious triumphs, of their ministry. How often do we read of the *boldness* of those holy men? "Now when they saw the *boldness* of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.—And now, Lord, behold their threatenings; and grant unto thy servants, that with all *boldness*, they may speak thy word."

Paul was as eminent for his courage, as for his discretion, his knowledge of human nature, his tenderness of heart, his generous forgiveness of injuries; and never, from any personal considerations, could he be induced to cover, distort, or soften the truths of the gospel. Observe his address to the elders of the church of Ephesus. "I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Behold him before the licentious Felix. Regardless of the factitious dignity of his auditor, the Apostle reasons of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, with a force of argument, and an energy of eloquence, at which the

governor trembles. Yes, it is the judge, who trembles ; —the prisoner before him, stands forth, undaunted, in all the calm and collected majesty of virtue. In the polished city of Athens, before proud Stoics and scoffing Epicureans, his holy courage does not forsake him. He preaches Jesus and the resurrection ; he enforces upon his gay hearers the duty of repentance ; and forewarns them of the day, when the great, the rich, the learned, with the ignorant, the poor and the oppressed, shall stand together at the judgment-seat of Christ. He could say to the Thessalonians, “But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were *bold* in our God, to speak unto you the gospel of God, with much contention.” He could declare, in view of the imprisonments, and complicated afflictions, that awaited him, “None of these things move me ; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.” Such, brethren, was the spirit of that great apostle, of whom it may truly be said, that he has done more, than any other mere man, that ever lived in our world, to rectify its moral views, diminish its guilt and its miseries, and swell, by the accession of its ransomed captives, the population of that eternal city, whose builder and maker is God.

All history is replete with examples. What shall we say of the reformers ? The work, they were honored to promote, commenced, under God, in the very spirit, we are recommending. The immortal Luther,

no less by his zeal, boldness and unconquerable perseverance, than by the splendour of his talents, and the rich variety of his acquisitions, was himself a host. Of John Knox, the father of the church of Scotland, it was testified over his grave, "*Here lies he who never feared the face of man.*" It was by the courageous and quenchless zeal of Whitefield, far more than by any superiority of genius, or strength of reason, or richness of intellectual attainment, that he was fitted for his destined work of rousing a sleeping world. This was the very soul of that commanding eloquence, which gathered around him, as by magic, congregations so vast, that they seemed like armies, summoned, suddenly, for the defence of their country; that eloquence, which fixed in breathless silence, the thousands that hung upon his lips, or overwhelmed them with emotions, too big for utterance. And no man has been employed as the voluntary instrument of extensive good to the church, who had not devoted himself to the object, with such an ardour of determination, and singleness of purpose, that he had learned to be afraid of nothing but defeat in this glorious enterprise.

The timid minister may perhaps be successful in attaching his people to himself; he may receive their commendations as a peace-maker; but he does little, or nothing, correspondent to the design of his office, and its solemn relation to their immortal interests. It is to be expected, that errors will increase, vices multiply, and stupidity becomes more stupid, under the powerless remonstrances of a teacher, who expresses no opinion till he first learns the opin-

ions of others, and who cannot collect dignity enough to awe, by his presence, vice and profaneness. Agreeing with every company, he, silently, gives license to worldly passions, the bitterness of slander, the rage of unrelenting party, and every extravagance of thoughtless levity ; and if at any time, from a regard to mere decency, he presumed to reprove transgressors, it is so weakly done, and so at variance from his habitual course, that it proves like “straw and rotten wood,” against the strength of Leviathan. To rebuke sharply, to open his mouth in earnest remonstrance, to save sinners as with violence, pulling them out of the fire, exceeds his power. At the critical moment, when, by a bold sally, he might perhaps, break through the ranks of the trembling enemy, and wave the banners of salvation over his proudest fortress,—*he*, instead of rising with vigor proportioned to the urgency of the occasion, indolently folds his arms, and, congratulating himself on his prudence, resolves to do—*nothing*. The happy opportunity may never return ; but he has secured, for the present, the peace of his parish ; and he is satisfied. Thus he wrongs the souls of his people ; and what for *himself*, does he gain ? Not their respect, if *they know him* ; for they who are first to flatter the temporizing pastor, must in their hearts despise him, for his weakness and treachery. His loss is infinite ; for he robs himself of the testimony of an approving conscience, the favour of God, and the reward of those, who sincerely labor, even without success, to rescue the slaves of Satan, from bondage and perdition.

So clear it is, that, without some portion of that

manly decision, by which we are prepared, if duty call, to meet opposition, in its most formidable shape, we must be worse than useless in the ministry. Suavity of manners, however valuable, in alliance with other excellencies,—and surely it is not to be contemned,—can, of itself, avail nothing, in the holy warfare, in which we are required to engage. We are to reject indeed all “*carnal weapons*,” but weapons we must use, and these massive, keen and glittering, supplied from the magazine of heaven, and wielded by an arm so resolute, that it will never rest from its exploits of valor, till broken by the stroke of death.

I hasten to the conclusion.

It is with no ordinary emotions, that we cast our eye over this busy and flourishing village, so suddenly with all its beauty, raised from waste sterility by the hand of diligence, and containing within itself so many of the elements of wealth, respectability and influence. With sentiments of a far more pleasing and holy character, we contemplate the direction, that, even in its infancy, has been given to its enterprise, in the establishment of a church, founded on evangelical principles, and in securing the blessings of the christian ministry. Every good man must rejoice with this Church and Society, in the constancy and unanimity of their efforts, and the successful result, they this day witness, under, as we believe, the approving care of Heaven.

Your pastor, brethren, will, we trust, with prudence, meekness and a winning deportment, unite that

holy courage, by which he will be enabled to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and to persevere in seeking your good, though the more abundantly he love you, the less he be loved. Receive him as an ambassador of the Lord of hosts. Let it not be by any fault of yours, that he shall be tempted to do the work of the Lord deceitfully, and to comfort the hearts of those, whom God has not comforted. Convince him, by the candour of your remarks, by all the various expressions of your friendship, and, above all, by your obedience to the gospel he preaches, that he has no reason to expect from you any discouragements, in the conscientious and diligent discharge of the duties of his office. Should he neglect to preach to you with plainness, those great doctrines of our religion, which, though opposed by the carnal heart, are the wisdom of God, and the power of God, unto salvation,—should he treat superficially, the subject of your native depravity, your utter ruin by sin, and the method of your recovery, through the atonement of Jesus, and by the special agency of the Holy Spirit,—should he be undistinguishing and loose, in his exhibition of the gospel, and withhold from you the salutary caution, and the needed reproof,—should he manifest indifference to the discipline and purity of the church, and look with stupid unconcern on the impenitent of his charge, travelling the broad road to destruction; then, I own, it may become you well to complain, and mourn, and weep. Then truly you may hang your harps upon the willows, and exclaim in plaintive accents, “How is the gold become dim! how is the

most fine gold changed !” But do not ask him, I beseech you, so to compromise his independence, as a man, a christian, and a minister, that he shall not dare, except in obedience to the wishes of his people, to inculcate what Christ has bidden him, and what he cannot withhold, but at the peril of his own, and your salvation. He has but one message to declare, and he cannot, without putting in jeopardy his own soul, and the souls of his hearers, reduce, or change, or fritter away the high demands of that book, whence all his authority is derived. Can any of you be such enemies to your own best interests, as to desire that he who addresses you on the concerns of a negotiation, stupendous in its consequences, as your everlasting weal or woe, should sink himself into your contemptible parasite, and strengthen you in the delusions of impenitence, till the light of truth shall break in upon your minds, amidst the agonies and shrieks of eternity ? I will not entertain suspicions, which imply a reflection so severe, on your understandings, as well as your hearts. Be it your earnest prayer, that he may ever come to you with the boldness he can nowhere learn, but in the closest of communion, and which he can never exhibit, except as impressions of the presence of God, and the future judgment, annihilate, in his mind, the force of all meaner considerations. May he, who is this day to be set over you in the Lord, so fulfil his ministry, and may you so hear, that both he and you “may have confidence,” when Christ shall appear, “and not be ashamed before him, at his coming.” May God visit you by his grace, and

“build you up, and give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.”

*My brethren in the ministry*—let us put on courage, and renew our diligence. The authority, the honour, the kingdom of our Master, requires it. The welfare of our churches, the deep stupidity of our congregations, the guilt and danger of sinners, our promises, our vows, and the interests of our own souls, all require it. Our time is short. The period of labour with us, will soon be over. Our voices will be mute. The grave will cover us. Soon shall we meet our hearers before the throne of judgment.—With Christ for our leader, why should we be afraid of a man that must die, and of the son of man, who is but a worm? The enemies of our Lord can neither plot, nor lift a finger, but by his permission. He leads them, at his will, by invisible, yet iron chains. Are we fearful, lest his strength should fail? or, lest he should forget his promise, and desert his servants, in the hour of their extremity? Why stand we hesitating? —BEHOLD, his standard is lifted up; he summons his hosts from the four winds; he goes before them; he gives the signal; they rush, they encounter, the battle rings — Who would remain behind? Who would not come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty? Who would be dismayed, leagued with Omnipotence in arms?—See the hostile legions—Some are flying; some are prostrate, and crying for mercy; some, inspired with a sudden loyalty, throw themselves, with weeping joy,

into the very arms of their Conqueror.—The confusion increases. Every line of the foe is broken. It is *a rout—a defeat—an OVERTHROW.*—*Hark! hark!* It is the shout of victory, bursting from ten thousand times ten thousand, and rending the vaulted skies.—“THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD ARE BECOME THE KINGDOMS OF OUR LORD, AND OF HIS CHRIST; AND HE SHALL REIGN FOREVER AND EVER.”

Wait a little longer; and the magnificent drama closes. “Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him. The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up. And death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire.” Now the full chorus of assembled angels, and men, redeemed out of every kindred, and nation, and tongue—breaks upon mine ear, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, “ALLELUIA; BLESSING, AND HONOR, AND GLORY, AND POWER, BE TO HIM THAT SITTETH UPON THE THRONE, AND TO THE LAMB FOREVER.”

Now, soldier of Christ! the crown, which, even at a distance, was so resplendent in thine eye, and for which thou didst toil, though at the loss of all things else, is thine own forever. They, who, by thy Redeemer’s blessing on the labors of thy heroic zeal, were rescued from their captivity to sin, and gathered into his kingdom, arise now, and call thee blessed, in the presence of an admiring universe. *Enter thou into thy Saviour’s joy, and sit down upon his throne.*

## CHARGE

DELIVERED AT THE ORDINATION OF THE

REV. PARSONS COOKE,

BY A. ELY, PASTOR OF THE CHURCH IN MONSON.

DEAR BROTHER,

YOU are now constituted a minister of Christ and the Pastor of this church. Although we are persuaded, that you both know the truth, and are established in the faith of the gospel, yet permit me, in behalf of this Ecclesiastical council, solemnly to remind you of some things, which are essential, that you may honor the high station in which you are now placed. The duties and responsibility of this sacred office have, no doubt, occupied much of your thoughts, and led you, we hope, deeply to feel that your "sufficiency is of God." With your eye, then, fixed upon the great Head of the church, we wish you to realize, that without him, you can do nothing, while we *charge* you before God, that you take heed to the ministry which you have now received of the Lord Jesus, to fulfil it.

Examine the sacred scriptures, with earnest prayer for the Spirit to enlighten and guide you into all truth. Give thyself to reading and to meditation, that your profiting may appear to all, and that you may be a scribe well instructed in the things of Christ's holy kingdom.—To teach others and defend the gospel against the attacks of its enemies, you must be well taught yourself, and amply furnished with all that wisdom and knowledge which will give power and efficacy to your instructions. "The priests' lips should keep knowledge and the people must seek the

the law at his mouth." See that you come forth to the people "laden with the fulness of the blessings of the gospel of peace."

Preach the word with all boldness, not in a hesitating and wavering manner, but with plainness, and decision, 'commending yourself to every man's conscience in the sight of God.' "In doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity." Keep back nothing which is profitable, that you may be pure from the blood of all men. Show a tender concern for their salvation, by faithfully exhibiting before them their depraved and lost condition by nature and the way of recovery by a crucified Saviour. Lay the deity, atonement and righteousness of Christ as the foundation of hope, on this fix the doctrines of regeneration, faith and repentance, and urge that holiness of heart and life, "without which no man shall see the Lord." Present the sovereign and free purposes of God, as the source of encouragement to the guilty, and the only sure pledge of the final salvation of any soul. Destroy every refuge of lies, undermine selfrighteous hopes, and endeavor to make the sinner feel his dependence on the grace of God. Lead the flock of Christ to the living fountains of his love, and to the refreshing pastures of his Spirit.

While you preach and defend the gospel, we *charge* you to show all meekness unto all men. "In meekness instructing those who oppose themselves." And while you reprove, rebuke and exhort, let it be with all *longsuffering* and *sound* doctrine, which cannot be condemned. At the same time, that you strenuously maintain the truth, and yield not a particle of it to the demands of error and of vice, show that you are not selfwilled, that you regard the authority and glory of God infinitely more than any selfish ends, or than the favour of men. Be not moved by the applause or the censures of the world, remembering that "it is a small thing to be judged of man's judgment," but approve yourself unto God, as a workman who needeth not to be ashamed. Teach and preach, not yourself, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and yourself the servant of the church, for Jesus' sake, then will Christ be magnified by you in all things.

Constituted as you now are, by the will of God, a Bishop in Christ's visible family, we *charge* you to administer the ordina-

ces, which he has appointed, with a strict regard to his word. Admit none to the privileges of the church, except those who give credible evidence that they have passed from death unto life, that they have faith to discern the Lord's body. Administer the ordinance of baptism to believers and their households only. And with earnest prayer for divine aid and direction, endeavour in the spirit of love, that the discipline which Christ has enjoined be maintained in his church, that the unruly be warned, and the feeble strengthened, and that all walk worthy of their high and holy calling.

We *charge* you, before the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, to be an example to the flock. "In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works. Follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." Let your own life and conversation exhibit the power of that religion, and the preciousness of those doctrines of grace, which you preach. "Take heed to thyself as well as to the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." Neglect not your own soul. See that in keeping the vineyard of others, you do not neglect your own. Be much in self-examination and prayer. Endeavour always to feel the power of godliness,—to have a lively sense of divine things. This will give the right kind of warmth and fervor to your public and private ministrations; this will save you from the awful result, after you have preached to others, of being yourself a cast-away.

We *charge* you, therefore, to continue in the faith and adhere to the doctrines of Christ, and commit the same to faithful men, when called to do it; but "lay hands suddenly on no man, that you be not partaker of other men's sins."

Finally, my dear brother, we *charge* you to "make full proof your ministry;"—be wholly devoted to the work, and take heed 'that you become not entangled with the affairs of this life.' "Contend earnestly for the faith, as it was once delivered to the saints. Be instant in season, out of season, teaching in public and from house to house. Count not your own life dear unto yourself, so that you may finish your course with joy, and the

ministry you have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. Be strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus. Be faithful unto death, and he shall give thee a crown of life."

That you indulge no desponding feelings, under the weight of the obligations now imposed upon you, nor cease to put forth all your strength in constant efforts to fulfil them, we exhort you, my brother, to repose, unceasingly, your entire confidence, in the power and grace of the great Immanuel, who hath promised "Lo I am with you alway;" and cherish the recollection of that day, when you and your people shall stand together before his throne of judgment, and when "those, who have turned many to righteousness, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars for ever and ever."

We hope your dear people, who have given substantial pledges of sincere attachment, will continue to 'esteem you very highly in love for your work's sake;' and not withhold any thing from you, which is necessary, that you may labor successfully among them, both in word and doctrine, unembarrassed with worldly cares and disheartening fears.

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.  
AMEN."

## RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP.

BY REV. RALPH W. GRIDLEY,

OF WILLIAMSTOWN.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

THIS is a new scene to you, and the most solemn through which you have ever passed. The *charge* you have now received, and the responsibilities under which you are placed, must, I know, weigh upon your mind, and excite within your breast unutterable emotions. Were you an Angel ;—had you a Seraph's heart, and a Seraph's mind, you might feel unequal to the task of discharging the duties of this high commission. But be not discouraged. You are not asked to go out in your own strength—you are not required to rely on an arm of flesh. "In the LORD JEHOVAH is your strength." Hearest thou that voice from heaven ? It comes from the lips of Jesus : "Lo I am with you alway." Is not this enough ? If you can depend upon the presence of Christ, and know that he will never leave you nor forsake you, you have nothing to fear. "His grace is sufficient for you." While, therefore, you tremble to think of your own insufficiency, you may with this promise of your Lord and Master before you, triumph and say : though weak, I am strong—"strong in the Lord and in the power of his might."

It is, also, a pleasant thought, and will, I doubt not, come home to your heart, that thousands, who love the cause which you are permitted to plead, and to which they have devoted all they have and are, feel a deep interest in you, and in the success of your ministry. We, your brethren in the ministry, who are here present, and the churches, with which we are connected feel this

interest, and thank God for the opportunity to offer you a public token of *christian and ministerial fellowship*. In their name I give you *this right hand*. Take it, my dear brother: it is a pledge of our affection and confidence;—of our support and assistance in every difficulty;—and of our sympathy in all your trials and sorrows. In giving it we bid you welcome to a participation with us, in all the privileges and immunities of this ministry. We hail you as a fellow laborer in the vineyard of Christ, and rejoice in that good Providence, which has stationed you here to build up and defend and beautify these walls of zion.

My brother, we shall never forget you. The work in which you are to engage lies near our hearts. It is the work of God—the work which he has been carrying on from the beginning of the world. It is the cause of Christ—the very cause in which he bled, and for which he now intercedes;—the cause which Angels love; in which prophets, and Apostles, and Martyrs have gloriously fought and conquered. It is a good cause;—it has for its object nothing less than to destroy the dominion of sin, to demolish the empire of Satan, and build on its ruins the kingdom of Christ:—to deliver from death eternal, souls lying under the curse of God, and to raise them to blessedness and glory;—and it will eventually succeed. The powers of earth and hell cannot prevent it. The kingdoms of this world *will* become the kingdoms of Christ, and this mighty revolution will be effected by the instrumentality of creatures like us. O, what a privilege, and what an honor to engage in a work so delightful and glorious.

This, my dear brother, is your work. You have nothing else to do as long as you live. And what is the great desire of your heart? Is it not to be instrumental in saving this dear people? You have been sent back, I had almost said, from eternity to preach to them the unsearchable riches of Christ. A few months ago, and I had not thought of seeing you here to day. If *this* right hand were ever to be given you again, I then supposed it could not be, till we met in our Father's house above. But, blessed be God, he has raised you up from the gates of death, and has set you here to plead for Christ, and tell sinners the way to life and glory everlasting.

Your heart, I doubt not, beats high with expectation;—and well it may. Preach as you have been charged to preach, and daily pour out your prayer to God and he will not long withhold the blessing. These heavens will open—your prayers, if offered from a broken heart, cannot be forgotten. God is faithful to his promises, and faithful to his Son.

Look, then, upon this congregation. How many souls have this day been committed to your charge;—they are precious souls, and will I hope *be your joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus*. O, how happy will you be to meet them in heaven and say; “Lord, here am I, and the children whom thou hast given me.”

But we cannot hope that you will see them all in that blessed world. No, some of them will probably reject the gospel you preach, and the Master you serve, and will in their turn be denied by him at last. But this subject is too painful for the present occasion. We will speak of it another day, and on our knees.

Go, my brother, and may God Almighty go with you—In all your trials and sorrows, remember *this right hand*. We promise you our prayers, and our sympathies. May we not depend on yours? Go, then, and may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you forever. AMEN.

AN ADDRESS

AT THE LAYING OF THE

**Corner-Stone**

OF THE

**MEETING HOUSE**

IN THE

EAST SOCIETY IN WARE,

**JUNE 21, 1826.**

BY REV. JOSEPH VAILL

OF BRIMFIELD.

## ADDRESS.

“How dreadful is this place !” exclaimed the holy Jacob, as he awoke from his slumbers, on a spot where having lighted for a night, with the rugged stones for his pillow, he sought repose. And what led the holy Patriarch to utter this exclamation ? It was the special presence of Jehovah that overawed him. He felt that God was in that place, and feeling this, there needed no external pomp or parade, no trappings of royalty, no thunderings or lightnings of heaven, to inspire him with awe, or fill him with trembling.

Standing in the open field, with the naked earth under his feet, and canopied with the skies, the thought that God was there was enough. Truly might he exclaim, “This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.”

To the holy man every place is dreadful, in proportion as he realizes the presence of the Divinity that presides over him.—And to which of the immortal beings that now stand on this eminence, whither we have come up to transact business with Jehovah, shall not this place seem dreadful. Although no temple for the worship of Jehovah *as yet*, sends up its spire, to greet our eyes, and cheer our hearts, by whom, notwithstanding, shall not this place be regarded, as none other but the house of God, and the gate of heaven ? Let us then as we cluster around the spot, which we are henceforth to regard as sacred, pause, and look up to Heaven, while we set before us the God who presides over the destinies of man, and who is now looking down upon us. Let us for once assemble before our eyes the mighty attributes of the Godhead, and fasten all our thoughts on the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity, who surveys the universe at once, whose mer-

cy endureth forever. Can we not, shall we not do this ! as we have come up hither to consecrate this spot as the site, and this stone, as the chief corner of a temple, which the lovers of Jerusalem in this rising Village, have desired in their hearts to build unto the Lord.

It is with no ordinary emotions that I address you on this occasion. This is a day of solemn, and of truly joyful interest to this community. We have witnessed with high satisfaction the early, the well-directed, and very laudable efforts, of the friends of religion, and morality here, amidst all their splendid worldly enterprises, to provide for the establishment of religious worship, and the stated ministrations of gospel ordinances. We have known with what anxiety you have sought the counsel, and cooperation of christian friends, and with what prayerful solicitude you have looked for help and direction to the Great Head of the church.

And has he not heard your prayers ? What hath God wrought ? Ye lovers of Zion ; take down your harps and break forth into singing. Let unbelief be put to shame. God has remembered you in the midst of all your difficulties. When you were weak, he strengthened you ; when desponding and trembling for the ark of God, you were ready to faint in the very threshold of your enterprise he comforted you, and brought to your aid, efficient and warm-hearted friends. How bright and cheering are the prospects now opening before you !

God has given you a church founded on that " faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and already, does this infant daughter of Zion begin to enlarge the place of her habitation, and to obtain favor in the eyes of the people, as well as in the eyes of the Lord. He has also led you, with great harmony of feeling, to the choice of one to go in and out before you, as your spiritual guide, and break to you the bread of life. This day you have received him, and warm from the solemn scene of his consecration, we have repaired with him, and you, to this beautiful eminence, to lay with due solemnities, the Corner stone of that sacred Edifice, in which, you, and your children, and the increasing population of

this flourishing village, are to hear from his lips, the words of life, and pursue an education for heaven.

While we admire and adore in view of what our eyes see, and our ears hear to day, in the presence of God, and admiring Angels, we now lay this Corner stone.\*

This stone we now set apart, and consecrate as the Corner stone of a sanctuary here to be erected, for the worship of the **ALMIGHTY JEHOVAH, FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST.**

This stone as the corner of this sacred Edifice, we do now solemnly dedicate to **CHRIST**, and the **CHURCH**. May it remain imperishable as the corner stone of a sanctuary to the living God in this place, till Christ shall have finished his work on earth, and the redemption of his Church shall be completed.

\* A deposit was then made of a vessel containing various papers, and a plate, with an appropriate inscription, and the stone placed in its bed.

In connexion with making the deposit the following remarks were made, while the speaker held the articles of deposit in his hand.

This vessel contains some of the most valuable religious periodical publications of the day—The confession of faith and covenant on which this church is founded—a copy of the records of the proceedings of the church up to this time, which embraces the names of the Pastor and Deacons of the Church,—A list of the names of the Gentlemen who have so liberally contributed to the erection of the house, also the names of the gentlemen, who have contributed towards the permanent fund for the benefit of the society; the names of the Gentlemen who compose the building Committee, together with the names of the Architects, also the names of the gentlemen stockholders of the Manufacturing establishment in this village, together with the standard American coins.

On this plate is the following inscription. Erected for the worship of Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Anno Domini 1826.

This vessel and this plate we now put beneath this stone, there to remain till we, who now witness these solemnities shall sleep in dust. They are deposited as a memorial for future ages, that when this building in the lapse of time shall moulder to ruins, and this stone be removed from its bed, generations now unborn may know that their fathers in the year of our Lord 1826, did on this ground, erect a sanctuary for the living God,—and may learn from ocular evidence the religious faith, and be led to revere the names, of those who were the principal actors in this truly christian enterprise.

With the belief that this work has been undertaken in the fear of the Lord, and with a supreme regard to his glory, we now commit this whole enterprise, in its commencement, progress, and completion, to the blessing and protection of Almighty God. While this building shall rise, God forbid, that any casualty occur to cast a gloom over the work or any dissension arise to hinder its progress, and completion. May this corner-stone be the pledge of your future union, and the rallying point of your benevolent action, and may it tell to generations yet unborn that their fathers of the nineteenth century were the friends of Christ and the Church.

It is no worldly enterprise in which you engage. Rather let this Stone crumble to dust, and the building about to be reared upon it, be given to the winds of heaven, than that this work should be undertaken to gratify your pride, or promote your worldly aggrandizement. This enterprise so holy in its nature, we will believe is undertaken with holy motives.

We will indulge the cheering thought, that the God who has helped you hitherto, now looks down with high complacency on these solemnities, having accepted your desire to build an house unto his name, and that under the smiles of his benignant providence, the building will rise, and the work go forward, till this dwelling-place for the Most High shall be completed, and he shall come into it with his glory and write his name upon its altar.

My friends, the Corner-stone which we have now laid, is emblematical. It points us to another Corner-stone, more glorious than any material stone however richly polished, and to a building which God is now erecting upon it, more glorious than any of these material temples. That Stone is the Lord Jesus Christ, that building is that spiritual temple the Church which he purchased with his own blood. "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste."

Survey this corner stone, behold this foundation laid in Zion! and come now with me, and let us look at the building which for almost six thousand years, has been rising upon it. "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens

with the saints, and of the household of God ; and are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone ; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord : in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Such is the nature of this spiritual and glorious building. "It is a temple of souls !" Every stone of which it is composed, is a blood bought spirit ! This temple now rising with unusual rapidity around us, will ere long be complete, and will stand an eternal monument of the glory of God, of his power, and wisdom and grace.

This building is of all others most important. Other buildings, and other things are important, only as they bear relation to it, and help it forward. To the advancement of this, should all our measures, and all our efforts be directed. This is the building which we desire most of all, to see rising on this ground and in the midst of this community, and it is only the expectation that what we are now doing will subserve this great object, that gives interest, and importance to these solemnities. This expectation we will indulge.

The corner stone is laid. The building goes up, it receives the finishing stroke ; it is consecrated unto the Lord. And now, behold this interesting community from every quarter going up to keep holy day. The house is filled with solemn worshippers. In it is heard the voice of prayer and praise, the word of life is dispensed while the assembly hang on the lips of the speaker. And now the spirit of the Lord comes down, many a bosom heaves, many a sinner trembles. And now is heard the anxious inquiry, and the Song of deliverance ; and now the Church lifts up *her* voice and sings, while she inquires with joyful exultation, "who are these that fly as a cloud and as doves to their windows ?" And now the work advances, the fire kindles from bosom to bosom, from family to family, until all this rapidly increasing population are brought under the holy influence of the gospel, and generation after generation feel its quickning and saving power.—Thus the temple of the Lord rises here in its glory, this sanctuary becomes emphatically the house of God, and to hundreds of immortal souls

the very gate of heaven. O how delightful this prospective view. God grant that it may be more than realized. And for this end, dear brethren, trust not to corner stones, or sanctuaries, or ministers, but trust in the Lord. In earnest and unceasing prayer, hang on the arm of Omnipotence. "For Zion's sake hold not your peace, for Jerusalem's sake rest not, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof, as a lamp that burneth."

Permit me in conclusion to remind you, that the time is coming when this stone will crumble to ruins, when these heavens shall be wrapped together as a scroll, and all these material temples, and material things shall be burnt up. From the ruins of the universe, but one precious Corner-stone will remain, and oh ! what will become of those that have not built on that foundation ? Where will they go ? Where will they rest ?

"It is my hearts desire and prayer to God " for you all that when you shall have done with temples made with hands, you may have a building of God an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.