

MEMOIRS

OF THE

REV. ZEBULON ELY, A. M.

OF

LEBANON, CONNECTICUT;

COMPILED FROM HIS OWN WRITINGS.

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THE subject of these memoirs was born in Lyme, in the state of Connecticut, in the parish called the North Quarter, February 6th, A. D. 1759. His father, Ezra Ely, was a respectable husbandman ; and his mother Sarah, whose maiden name was Sterling, was a Lady of superior education, for the times in which she lived : but providence removed her from her affectionate partner, two little daughters, and her only son, when he was an infant of four months.

In his childhood he discovered a fondness for books, but enjoyed no advantages above those which the public schools of his native state have uniformly presented to all her offspring, until he commenced a course of academical studies, under the tuition of an excellent instructor, the Rev. Elijah Parsons, of East Haddam. By his close application and upright behaviour he secured the friendship of that pious and sound divine ; and under his auspices, was able in nine months after he took the Latin grammar in hand, to enter Yale College.

In that institution he was distinguished as a Linguist, by obtaining the *Dean's Bounty* ; and in the other attainments usually made in our higher seminaries of learning, he was excelled by few of his companions.

While in his junior year, in 1777, he began to write what he called "Life's Review ;" and he continued the practice of recording his yiews, feelings, trials and mercies, at short intervals, until disabled by that disease which translated him to Heaven. He assigned as his reasons for keeping a diary, that it would be satisfactory to review past life, provided it should be filled up with usefulness ; and that if otherwise spent, it would be necessary to humble himself before God, and supply him with the matter for supplication at the throne of grace.

While in College he began to feel a deep concern for the salvation of his immortal soul ; and since the perusal of his reflections may be profitable to some who are soon to follow him to the world of spirits, he shall be permitted to speak, as from the grave, and tell how he agonized to enter into the kingdom of Heaven.

Herbert L. Moller, Jr. 37
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“ Oct. 4, 1777.—Another day is gone, and where am I? Nearer heaven or hell! God only knows. Yesterday was the Lord’s day; but alas! it was stained with foul corruption. Oh, my wicked heart! I am a loathsome carcase, polluted wholly with sin:—a stupid wretch! a blind mortal. My being out of hell, sufficiently proves God merciful. O that God would look upon me, and grant me some realizing sense of ETERNITY! for none have I had these several days past. Turn thy face toward me, Great King, or I am eternally undone.— I hope I have not committed the unpardonable sin; but I am not without fears, Should it be my turn to die this night, I should, indubitably, wake in exquisite torments. I cannot pray, although hell is gaping for me? Stupid, barren, forsaken!

“ Oct. 16, 1777.—Oh! what a hell of wickedness do I daily carry about. I fear I am in the swift road to eternal destruction. O that I could have some sense of my own wickedness. I am altogether a hypocrite, actuated entirely by self love. Merciful God, I know not what to ask! destroy this supreme self-love, and substitute a love for thy glory, which shall increase to the end of life.”

After having been thus affected with dreadful apprehensions of the wrath of God, we find the youth, in November following, seduced from God by the business and gay amusements of life. Flashes of conviction, however, occasionally compelled him to say, “My Junior year will soon be spent, and unless I double my diligence, I am undone forever.”

In July, 1778, he wrote the following solemn document.

“ In the presence of Almighty God, in presence of all the heavenly host, of all the holy angels, and saints who surround his throne, I this evening most solemnly give up myself, body and soul, with all my powers and faculties to God and his service; humbly entreating that he would make them subservient to his own glory. In consequence of this solemn dedication, I declare war with the flesh, and the devil, humbly imploring divine assistance, that I may overcome them, and to God be all the glory. I will renounce the way of sin, allow myself in no known evil, but strictly adhere to the precepts of Jesus Christ. I will strive to live a holy life, filling up my few remaining moments, in devotion morning and evening, in the employments of God and religion; in striving to the last to support the cause of the blessed Redeemer; in all things aiming at his glory and the salvation of souls. I do from this moment resolve to live a life of watchfulness and prayer, not thinking that these will save me; but as they are the institutions of God, I will cheerfully comply with them, and all the duties of the like kind; esteeming it my inestimable privilege. I resolve to keep the sabbath holy, accounting it my delight; not doing my own business, but striving to be in the spirit on the Lord’s day, I resolve so soon as I shall think it consistent with the grace of God bestowed on me, (which I humbly entreat God to grant quickly) to give myself up to Almighty God publickly, before God, angels, and men, to comply with that holy ordinance instituted by our blessed Saviour, who saith, ‘ this do in remembrance of me,’ and ‘ as often

as ye do this, ye do shew forth the Lord's death until he come.' I will be careful in all my actions not to dishonor God, nor that sacred religion which I now profess before heaven and hope shortly to profess before all mankind; animated by that glorious saying of our Saviour, he that is ashamed to confess me before men him will I be ashamed to confess before my Father who is in heaven, and before all the holy angels. And whereas by the free grace of God, I am in some measure convinced that I have hitherto built upon a sandy foundation and not on Christ, the rock of ages, the only solid foundation, but have been setting up my own righteousness, thinking I could be saved by my own good deeds, and have not been willing to give all glory to Christ, to whom belong all glory and praise throughout eternity, and trust alone in his salvation, which alone is sufficient, I declare my own righteousness filthy rags, renounce it, and whatever I have thought worthy of acceptance, and declare my hope and confidence in the blood of the Saviour, to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen.

Well may angels esteem this their highest theme and saints break forth in loud Hallelujahs, and all creation be wrapt up in eternal praise. Great God of Heaven, and all ye angels and saints who surround his throne, I call, in humble confidence and most dread solemnity, I call you all to witness to this my solemn vow to serve the Lord, in whose awful presence I would set my name,

ZEBULON ELY.

I have now given myself up to Almighty God! what then, I have given no more than was his before, and what I had no claim to. He gave my soul, and to his service I have resigned it. He gave my body, and all my members, and to his glory may they be employed. And now, O righteous Father, I humbly intreat thee to accept of one, though a worm, though the vilest of mortals: yet may the precious blood of the Saviour wash me from my guilt. O most merciful Jehovah, I earnestly entreat thee to preserve me from all sin, and to save my immortal soul. Amen. Glory to God."

Under date of August 7, 1778, he wrote, "Last evening Austin and myself went up into the library with Mr. Baldwin, where we had a prospect of the moon through a telescope. This naturally turned our thoughts on lofty subjects, and lead to a very serious conversation, in which we both frankly confessed the damnable state we were in. Among other things, I made this observation, that it was uncertain whether we should ever enjoy another night, and it had like to have so proved with me this morning, for I was providentially snatched from the jaws of all devouring death, when struggling in the deep."

He was bathing in salt water, near the Dragon bridge, east of New Haven, and being caught with the cramp had gone to the bottom twice. As he was at the point of descending to rise no more, a friend passed and extended to his eager grasp a slender cane, with which he was drawn to the shore.

“*Nov. 6, 1778.*—About the middle of last summer, I was affected in conversation with Woodbridge, and until the vacation, at intervals was anxious about the important concerns of eternity. At times I was buried in thought, and unable to communicate my feelings. In a great measure I lost my relish for vain company, and trifling conversation. The serious seemed more suitable to my circumstances. I desisted from such bodily exercises as my classmates engaged in, not because I deemed them unlawful, but through fear my mind would be diverted from the grand object of pursuit:—‘lest ye let them slip.’

One evening I was much affrighted at thunder, fearing every clap would be commissioned to strike such a wretch from the earth and send him to the fell regions of despair. Before this, I do not remember to have been ever fearful of that lively emblem of the voice of God.

Sometimes, to a small degree, I was conscious of my own vileness; and at other seasons I seemed to be full of prayer to God. One evening I laboured under delusion, but thanks to God, soon became convinced of it.

I have also almost wished to be brought low by sickness, that I might realize eternity, and see if that would not produce a reformation. Providentially I had opportunity to know what effect this would have: but the ship’s keel leaves no impression in the waves. As I was much alone last summer, I fancied that to be the period of renovation, or at least that I should be savingly changed in the time of vacation, when I should have no other concerns. But alas! summer and vacation are past, and God only knows whether my heart is any better.

I am now happily settled for a time: O that it might be a good opportunity to my soul.

A few evenings since I was much pleased with the doctrine of free grace; for it is calculated to humble the creature, and give all glory to God the creator.

Nov. 7.—O that God would discover to me my state and condition. I pray that I may be preserved from delusions.

Nov. 8.—Alas! this must be reckoned with my mispent Sabbaths. My imagination has been upon the wing, and my heart, not to say my eyes,—Death will soon draw the curtain, and discover my folly. How dismal the prospect of launching into the open world, with no better guide than my own frailty.

Nov. 10.—Methinks I sow the wind, and shall reap the whirlwind. Oh! giddy world! Oh! unthinking youth! Is not time too short, too precious, thus to be trafficked away for vanity? The gay, delicate, and smiling fair must be shrouded in the grave, and given a prey to worms.

Nov. 16.—I follow after vanity, and fawn to folly. Amazing! that I am so besotted. Neither happiness, nor piety, nor profound science are to be obtained from without: the cabinet is their favourite residence; and in the cabinet, my friends, I will court you. What would

be my consternation should the King of Terrors approach me in my giddy rants? Amazing stupidity! and amazing benignity!

Dec. 29, 1778.—Some anxious care almost perpetually corrodes our breasts; but I am persuaded that friendship in purity affords the greatest temporal felicity. We may carry the idea further, into the world of spirits, and by placing our affections upon the supreme essence of excellence and source of eternal delights we shall find our highest good. My time passes agreeably and usefully, but too carelessly. Spend not a moment in vain.

Jan. 13, 1779.—Religion must be cultivated, and Heaven begun in this life, or it will never be perfected in the future. Resolved to be more serious; to observe a greater decorum in all my deportment; to avoid mimicry; and to shun slander. To kill evil in the bud, let me strive to have a good heart. Let some hours go to solitude and devotion, which alas! has been too long neglected; in consequence of which I have found a cold heart, and love for holiness languishes in my breast.

Jan. 14.—I am weary with this labour of folly, and sickly sound of dull impertinence. Long enough have I been fraught with laughter, and wearied with unrefined, mixed company, in which one must sit as a mope or assume the uncouth air of a pedant. When I spend time in company, I expect to enjoy some pleasure or be of some profit; either diversion without labouring after it, amusement without pain, or utility without pedantry.

Jan. 17.—Thanks to God for any returns of his Spirit. Spread all thy sails, O my soul, to catch these gentle gales that blow from Heaven. If rightly improved they may be strong enough to waft thee into the safe port of unutterable bliss.

Allure and delay the celestial dove, lest, being turned away grieved, it return no more.

Divine Immanuel, please to fulfil to thy lingering servant thy gracious promise of sending the Comforter. O delay not, lest I die.—Who, without thine assistance, is sufficient to maintain a warfare against the combined force of the allurements of the world, our corrupt inclinations, and the legions of hell!

January 23d. A slay-ride now I have had, of thirty six miles, and have been favoured with the best of slaying, and with the best of gay company. What a toil after pleasure! happiness I have not found, and surely no profit. My devotion has been lulled to sleep; my mind has not been enlarged; and if I have had the honour of good company, worthless fellows have had the same.

Feb. 2, 1779.—I fear I am lulled to sleep in the cradle of carnal security; and am slumbering over my own damnation. May that infinitely kind being, who, I have reasons to think has begun a good work in me, carry it on to perfection: and though the Holy Spirit has been often grieved, may he return and complete his work.

Feb. 1779.—Ripton. Greatly has my stupidity increased, methinks, since I have been in this place. My breast has been seldom warmed with devotion: my thoughts have been little upon eternity. This evening a momentary ardour shot through my breast; but alas!

how transient. At times I well nigh faint, fearing that I shall never be any better, and that the Holy Spirit has deserted me. The world has gained such ascendancy over me, that I fear I shall become more and more cold in religion until I am cold in the dust. I seem more hardened in sin, more callous to the admonitions of Providence, and more formal in all duties which are not neglected. Secret prayer and self examination have been for a season almost wholly neglected. The vanities of the world have engrossed my thoughts, and the toys of life have been converted into objects of serious attention. I am now forming habits for life, and shall grow better or worse till its close. At this crisis, how great is my danger! Admonitions I have had repeatedly. The voice of Providence has been sufficiently loud to wake any one not dead in stupidity. Just as I made my appearance in this world, I was called back to the threshold of another. I was exposed to many hardships by the loss of my mother; lost my sight during four days by the measles; had the small-pox in the natural way, and was brought very low by it; have frequently fallen from horses, and from a high elevation in a barn; and have been more than once in perils by water; but God has delivered me. What shall I render to the Lord for all his goodness towards me? O ungrateful, unthinking wretch!

I have been loudly admonished by the death of friends and relations; especially by that of Colt, who being dead yet speaketh. For a winter, our business, our pleasures, our pursuits, our hearts were the same; but the same means which deprived him of life freed me from much anxiety. True, the tidings of his death struck me with some force, when I considered our intimacy and the few days which had intervened since I saw him, as I supposed, in a situation preferable to my own. Young, fresh and blooming, lately, he is now with the dead; his body has mouldered into dust, and his spirit is acquainted with the world of spirits. I may also mention the death of Swetland, with whom I was intimate; and with whom I watched frequently, and even in his last night, without taking the contagious distemper which hurried him away. Why were they taken, while I am left? Can I live and not praise God, and employ my spared life in his services?

The strivings of the blessed Spirit with me have been frequent; perhaps more than common; and have followed me year after year, as if unwilling to give me up. But God says, and who can disobey it? 'My spirit shall not always strive with man;' and 'He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his heart, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy. This, I have reason to fear, will be my case; but O, I hope his benign influences are not yet passed—that his sanctifying operation is not finished. Can it be, after all this, that I should still be unawakened from my lethargy, and not vigorous in pursuit of Heaven?—Can the pomp and show of this vain world so absorb my attention, as to leave no room for those concerns of eternal moment? What is this drop of time, when compared with the ocean of eternity? What are the amusements of this world, to the unceasing raptures of Heaven? How seraphic the thought of being clad in immortal youth, and seated at the right

hand of God, where are pleasures for evermore ; or of winging our flight with the celestial host from world to world, while ever in the presence of the incarnate Son of God ! What unforeseen beauties in the works of creation will continually unfold to the ravished senses ! If from terrestrial, finite, imperfect beings, we derive much happiness here, how sweet will be the society of the blessed, when imperfections shall have an end, and we become universally worthy and pleasing ! Bold fancy faints in the conception, and imagination dies.

March, 1779.

Amazing is the goodness of God, that such a vile mortal should not only have a being upon earth, but should be surrounded with so many conveniences, and under such distinguished privileges. From my conduct one would naturally conclude, that the favours I enjoy are the result rather of debt than of bounty ; and that I am conscious of deserving them from the great Creator ; otherwise I should manifest more gratitude. From my cradle to this time, I have been under the propitious smiles of a kind Providence, and amazing it is that the goodness of God should not lead me to repentance. External favours have not only been multiplied upon me, but the strivings of the ever-blessed Spirit have been reiterated within my breast ; all which if I finally die impenitent I may with good reason conclude, will tend to sink my soul in the unfathomable abyss. In proportion to our opportunity, ought to be our improvement ; and in proportion to our knowledge, will be our punishment. The heathen, who are guilty of gross idolatry ; the papists, who grope under superstition, together with the unbelieving Jews, will rise up in judgment against me.

Must I at last lie down in despair ? Must I bid adieu to this world without any prospect of glorious immortality ; with the dismal expectation of endless remorse ? This life affords no happiness which is our being's end and aim ; must I, then, after living a short life of trouble and anxiety, enter upon a state of woe unutterable ? O horror ! horror ! A cold dampness chills my blood, at the thought. O far better had I never been brought into existence !

Poor mortal that I am, encompassed with sorrow, and without prospect of relief ; I am wearing out a wretched existence, only to be clad in exquisite distress.

Oh my soul, knowest thou thy destiny ? Here thou complainest of the vile body ; but who can converse with endless groans ? Could this miserable person sit in some dark corner of creation, and become a prey to tears, and be familiar with heart-rending sighs, *that* would be happiness compared to what I am soon about to feel. Could I in some hollow cavern of the earth, some dark vault, toil forever, *that* would be Paradise, *that* would be happiness, in comparison with what I dread. Could I sink into non-existence, then would death's grim face be changed. Were death and the grave my last end, all would be perfect peace and serenity : then would the king of terrors be unarmed with scorpions—He would execute his commission almost without pain : dying would be but taking our discharge from a

world of anxiety, in which we continually experience evils, or fear those we never feel. Oh my eyes, weep, weep, weep: the dismal day is approaching—the day that seals thy grief and woe, and consigns thee to endless excruciating tortures. My friends look on my lifeless corse—behold a withered branch—my eyes are but closed to wake in tortures. Think no more of me, for I am wretched, past your recovery. You will see me no more until you join in the last, final, solemn sentence, which banishes me forever from the gates of bliss. May you be happy, but as for me, I never can. Will ye not in the long ages of eternity, sometimes think of wretched me who am groaning under chains of darkness? Once I was your delight; we held sweet converse together: hereafter ye will never think of me but with horror and detestation. But can there be such feelings in Heaven? If not, ye will cease to think of me forever. Whither shall I go? On what stay my heart? On the rock of ages? Oh! what have I to do with the rock of ages? There is no good thing in me. Alas! I faint, I sink under the apprehension. I am buried in carnal security, and it seems if any thing would have roused me this side the flames of hell, that I should have been awake before now. What awaits me but swift destruction from the Most High, and to be consumed by the breath of his nostrils! What awaits me but the just punishment of incensed Heaven! Oh! ye damned in hell, I shall soon be your companion, unless God Almighty work speedily, through the mediator.

March 11, 1779.—Yesterday I read some in the Alcoran, which by its imperfections seemed to give new beauties to the Bible.

The wisdom and benignity of God are conspicuous in making all conduct which is contrary to our duty incompatible with our felicity. Could we keep the divine precepts perfectly, I doubt not we should be completely happy.

The important question presses on my mind, What is it to be a good man?

April 2, 1779.—To-day I have been at church, it being Good Friday. My own eternal happiness rather than the glory of God is the object of my anxiety.

Saturday, N. H. April 3, 1779.

I am about bidding adieu to the world, I mean the gayer part of it. I have already drawn up a dissolution for one of my tenderest connexions, and believe that I shall be able to dissolve it, though nature may be a little reluctant. I am sensible it is a bold stroke to set up one's self in opposition to the current of the world, that rapid stream of life, down which the silken sons of pleasure are gently sailing, into the unfathomable abyss! Polite company is fraught with vanity, and vice is patronized by great and in other respects worthy characters. 'Tis all vanity. Such a life is only dreaming, living to no purpose. Old age will show us the vanity of such a course of conduct. All are shadows. There is no substance in them. "They live a life of ease and in a moment go down to the

grave." Full long enough have I been servant to vanity, and laboured against my own inclination to no purpose. I have considered myself as bound to the subject of small talk, and laboured harder to talk nonsense than good sense. 'Tis time to assert myself and make the sacred volume the rule of my life, and take the life of the only perfect man for my inimitable pattern. I must stem the torrent of the world, or be borne down with it into the unfathomable vortex.— I need not hesitate. I am of years enough to make a wise choice, to settle a firm judgment, and abide by it, through the assistance of Christ.

I now arraign the world. Let it have an impartial hearing, but let not the father of lies and corrupt nature plead for it. Is communion with such loose vain company consistent with communion at the consecrated supper? Does such levity favour the influence of the Spirit? Does conversation made up of vanity warm the heart to devotion? From such a course of conduct does any real benefit accrue to mankind? Is the world the wiser, the happier, for our nocturnal revellings? The subject is then reducible to this plain point. If neither we ourselves nor our fellow mortals receive any advantage, and there is no glory derived to the One Supreme, such a course is repugnant to our duty. What say you world? What can you plead?— That this question be decided is of infinite importance. Why I never discussed it before I am unable to say, and say not what gave rise to the present undertaking.

In favour of her cause the world pleads, the accomplishment of the person. Let us consider this argument. Is the body immortal?— Were it to continue forever, that would be a reason for taking pains in its embellishment. But methinks that which is mouldering away and is subject every moment to be in such a state as renders it necessary to house it in the dust, merit not such particular attention. I consider this argument as the only one of weight which can be adduced by the world. Some make a pompous parade about a conformation to the fashions and customs of the world; but all arguments that can arise from this source are too gross to need a confutation, as though the regions of despair would be indeed less gloomy, on account of the gay company that will be there.

As to the second test, I see no possible good that can accrue to mankind. As to the third, I see not how any glory can be derived to the One Supreme. To one of these I think it evident that all our actions ought to be subservient.

Is such a course inconsistent? Have I so long been blind to the truth? Why are so many now embracing falsehood? But every one must think and act for himself. By comparing ourselves with ourselves, we show not our wisdom. Let us with intrepid fortitude, stem the current of the world, and show ourselves bold and undaunted in our opposition, looking forward unto the glorious reward. Let us feel no reluctance at parting with these pleasures. Let us cast them off as vipers, and hug not the sweet morsel within our bosom, that is impregnated with poison. By parting with these we claim our freedom, and are brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

At length we are freed from bonds and the heavy yoke of sin. Let us lay aside every weight saith the inspired Apostle, and what are these but weights and sins that do most easily beset us.

Are these things so? Have I not resolution? I pray God direct me. Do I draw back? Then I know the consequence:—"My soul shall have no pleasure in him. He is not fit for the Kingdom of Heaven." Are not the riches of Christ sufficient?

Saturday, April 3d, 1779.

O that I could preserve this temper of mind through life, this sweet disposition, this noble resolution; then me thinks I should be happy. I hope God is about to do something for my soul. Should this be the time I must forever declare it was not my own seeking, but attribute all to the operation of the kind Spirit.

This world is full of deceit. Long have I been deceived. I think I never viewed it in such a light before. But I know not. I fear delusion. God who has brought me thus far protect me. Praised be his goodness. Praised be his mercy. What am I? But God has no respect to persons, he does please to take notice and have mercy on some of our depraved fallen race.

How blinded are mankind! through what a false medium they view things! upon what slippery places do we move!

Great is the mystery of godliness. Why should I be singled out? O God protect me from the world. Without thee I can do nothing; by thy assistance I cannot only resist the world, but all the infernal legions. O merciful Jesus, help me to maintain this glorious warfare.

Take me under thy care, hide me under the covert of thy wings. O the sweetness of this solemn familiarity with Jesus, the sweet Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world. The world knows not the pleasure of conversing with him. Who would be under the cruel bondage of satan? God brings all his sons into a glorious liberty. This service is perfect pleasure, his bonds are easy, all is perfect freedom. Great God protect me from this moment. I fear a decline, I fear I shall be again taken up with the vanities of life, and the transitory visions of time and sense. But God is able to protect me. I would rest and rely on him alone. I would put my whole trust and confidence in him, not in an arm of flesh, not in my own feeble strength. But when I am weak, then am I strong.

With a noble fortitude I would set this world at defiance. To the vain and delusory pleasures of time and sense, I would bid a lasting adieu. With an eye fixed on the recompense of reward I would surmount every obstacle. This is a most cheering circumstance, that our Divine Master is both able and ready to assist us, whenever the world is like to be too hard for us; and we are assured of his divine assistance if we put our trust in him. Let us look up to him and there will be no danger.

As we act in opposition to the world, so it is necessary that we act above the world. Let us with equanimity encounter all hardships that we may meet with in the christian course, esteeming all but as dress and dung that we may win Christ. Let us keep our eye fixed

on the mark, and let nothing that can happen to us in this world, divert our attention. Let us spurn at all earthly felicity, take the spoiling of our goods in peace, and not only so, but let us be ready to meet death with calmness and resolution. Our lives should be accounted dear no longer than they are subservient to the glory of God: the moment the honor of the Redeemer calls for them, that moment we should lay them down, for on such terms we received them, being born not for ourselves but for the glory of God. How vile is it that we should be unwilling to forego sensual gratifications when set in competition with the joys of the New Jerusalem! Shall we prefer the good of the creature to the divine amiableness? Shall we love the creature, laboring under so many imperfections, and not place our supreme affection on the Creator, who is absolutely and completely perfect, who is love ineffable? Let us rise superior to the world and all its enjoyments, and rest our souls on God, on Christ Jesus the rock of ages. Let us look down with a sacred contempt upon all created good, and look up with a seraphic ardour to uncreated good, and pour forth our whole souls in love to the Deity.

O Divine Immanuel, unveil thy beauties to me, ravish my heart with a sweet sense of thy delights, fill my mouth with eternal praise, and warm my soul with devotion. May a sense of thy greatness fall upon me and thy excellence make me afraid. May I contemplate on thy perfection day and night, and have sweet visions in the night season.

Sunday, April 4, 1779.

Still I am at a loss about myself. I know not what I am, nor why I am thus. Whether it be the effects of melancholy, or of the season upon my constitution, that I experience, I know not. But still I would hope and trust there is an invisible hand in all this.

Setting this world at defiance, I would rush forward with a sacred ardour to the end of the race, where the forerunner is entered, Christ Jesus the righteous. I would disentangle myself from the gross encumbrances of the world, the impediments of the flesh, act in contrariety to them all, and esteem them as a thing of no value.

O my friends, let not this vain world deceive you. Many strong men have been cast down by her. Yea, she hath ruined thousands and tens of thousands: her steps take hold on hell; they lead down to the chambers of death. I have long been in slavery to the world, and never before felt myself so much at liberty. I seem to myself almost in a new world. Grievous are the shackles of such a slavery. O defy her! Be no longer deceived by that subtle adversary. He lies in wait for your souls. He holds out the world as a bait, and with a sweet morsel hides a hook that will tear out your very vitals. But whatever others do, I am resolved, and if this resolution be from God, I trust he will enable me cheerfully to persevere and carry it into execution.

O my dear Jesus, save me, protect me from the world, from the wiles of the old serpent, and from the lust of the flesh. Let me fight under thy banner, and I shall come off victorious over these potent

enemies. 'Tis thou, O Christ Jesus, that has wrought out my salvation, and 'tis thou, O Holy Spirit, that hast carried on this work thus far. Not unto me, O God, not unto me, but to thyself be the glory. Thou hast gotten me the victory; as I hope it is in part obtained. It was thine own seeking, not mine. If I am chosen, 'tis thou that hast chosen me from before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, glorify thyself by thine unworthy servant. Glory to God in the highest, and peace be within my breast. Shout ye that dwell on high, for my Redeemer liveth, and remembereth to show mercy. Praise him in the highest strain ye bright intelligences, ye who dwell in light show forth his praise. The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man can do unto me. Regard not what the world may say, but act boldly. Seeing we are encompassed with so great a cloud of witnesses, seeing we are in the presence of angels, and what is still infinitely greater, of God himself, let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth most easily beset us, and run with patience the race set before us; looking unto Jesus.

I must go unto God for wisdom, with full purpose of heart, nothing wavering, firmly resolved in my course. I must not be double-minded. I have taken my resolution, and must hold it fast unto death. But I fear to walk in this perverse and crooked world. However I would always consider myself in the immediate presence of Christ Jesus, who will afford me his all-powerful aid, and give me strength according to my temptations. With him I can do all things, and though weak, I need not fear the world.

There seems to be a radiant light cast over the Scriptures as I peruse the sacred pages, as I look into the rule of my life, that inexhaustible source of wisdom, which is able to make us wise unto eternal salvation. "Whosoever looketh into the perfect law of liberty;"—the law of God is perfect liberty;—"keeps himself unspotted from the world." Come down into the dust, O world. Whoever is a friend to the world is an enemy of God. With the world I declare war, and however arduous it may be, this is encouraging that the conflict is but short, and through Divine assistance I am sure of the victory.

I think I am nearly resolved in a matter which has been long agitated in my breast, to come to the communion of the Lord's supper. I will make a bold and vigorous attempt, and risk all upon Christ. I know I am a sinner, a polluted mortal, but the blood of Christ I trust will cleanse me. Why should I neglect to acknowledge him before the world, who, I trust, has redeemed my soul? If he has inspired me with this noble resolution to serve him, I trust he will enable me to carry it into execution. Why should I hesitate respecting this matter? The reproaches of the world I would esteem my gain, my honour, my glory. Merciful God help me.

Sunday, April 4th, 1779.

How incomprehensible, how inconceivable and transcendantly glorious is Jehovah! How great is that omnipotent Being who wields the immense universe of worlds! who commanded the whole into existence,

and upholds them in the most complete and perfect harmony! Immortal minds in a state of growing perfection to all eternity, will fall infinitely short of comprehending this supreme, eternal being! The highest seraph in heaven can form no adequate idea of him, but is swallowed up in admiration. He alone comprehends himself. Our minds cannot search out to perfection a single attribute. How incomprehensible art thou, O one supreme!

His Omniscience has been this afternoon, I will not say discussed, but discoursed of, by a person whom I esteem near the summit of human perfection; but how much, though inflamed with the subject, did he fall short of the description. Here finite minds find their weakness, and stagger in the attempt; for 'tis the very nature of infinite not be comprehended by finite.

The Deity is a subject on which we may employ our thoughts continually, and still find fresh delight. We may contemplate his works of creation, and behold the whole formed in unerring wisdom, and completed with exquisite beauty; so that the exact symmetry of the whole, and the perfect concordance of all its parts are beautifully expressive of its Divine original. In the minutest parts the Deity is conspicuous, and the least particle of creation, when narrowly inspected, unfolds wonders.

We may contemplate his works of providence and (as far as our comprehension will reach, and in proportion to our sagacity is our admiration,) behold the whole plan laid in infinite wisdom, in the eternal counsels of Jehovah; and the whole carried on with the most consummate skill, and verging to completion, as to human matters, with the most perfect regularity and quick dispatch. Hence they must be fools and without excuse who say there is no God.

I could wish to enlarge on this subject which is infinite and inexhaustible, but the business of the week seems necessarily to demand my attention. And I would not dismiss what I have been contemplating this day, yesterday in the afternoon, and last evening, before I commend myself to God. To him would I commit all my ways and the thoughts of my heart, that they may be established. I humbly entreat Almighty God to take me under his care, to protect and defend me from the world, to enable me to lay aside every weight and the sin that doth beset me, and to run with patience, resolution, and perseverance, the race set before me, looking to, trusting in, and relying upon Christ Jesus, the author and finisher of my faith, who for the joy set before him endured the shameful death of the Cross.

I would humbly hope and trust by the assistance of Almighty God the Father, Christ Jesus the most merciful Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit the sanctifier and preserver, three distinct persons in one mysterious Godhead; by the grace of the great triune Jehovah, from this day to date a new life, a life devoted unto God; my acceptance with the Father through the redemption of Christ; and my reconciliation with the Deity through the mediation of our great high priest.

God worketh when and how he pleaseth. "Of his own will begat he us." Unto him be the glory, for he hath led me thus far. To God

only wise be glory throughout eternity. To the Son be glory, to the Holy Ghost be glory.

“Methinks the heavens ring with praises now,
And highest saints before their Saviour bow.”

Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and good will towards men. Behold the Saviour on the cross. Behold him raised on high, having led captivity captive and giving gifts unto men!

Be astonished O heavens, break forth into singing and shout O earth, the Lord thy Redeemer liveth.

Wilt thou indeed, O God, dwell with man, thou whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain!

“Expressive silence, muse his praise!”

Tuesday, April 6, 1779.

Through the goodness of God I think my temper of mind continues the same. I would humbly hope and trust that I am not under a delusion. I fear I have not been duly sensible of the bitterness of sin, and been left to loathe and abhor myself for it; but God only knows; in him I would trust.

Methinks if I know what praying in faith is, I have in some measure been enabled to pray in faith these few days past; but God searches the heart; and forever praised be his great and glorious name, for what I humbly hope and trust he has done for my soul. I pray that great and merciful Being, to confirm and establish me.— Through his Divine assistance I know I can do all things; and without it, I pray that he would teach me more and more what a helpless being I am. On Christ Jesus would I rely, in him place my strength, be devoted entirely to him, and have my heart continually glow with ardent love unto him. I pray that he would not permit my affections to be placed too much on earthly objects, but that he would take the entire and unreserved possession of me, and enable me to feel for all mankind, and to love them as myself. O most merciful Jesus, without thee I faint and shrink into nothing. O assist me a helpless creature; afford me thy Divine aid. Glory to God in the highest. Methinks I could, without much reluctance, part with life; but I know not how I should feel should I see grim death approaching. The world is so full of temptations and dangers, that I fear, I fear a decline; but God is able to protect and preserve me. I will trust in Jesus and not fear. Assist me, O Divine Immanuel. Before another sacramental solemnity, through the assistance of God, I determine to show to the world, who it is that has enabled me to choose him, so that I may sit down with the people of God and commemorate the death of our once crucified, but now ascended and glorified Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. If any reproach me, I would bear it with cheerfulness and esteem it my glory. What can be more glorious than to suffer reproach in the cause of religion, in the cause of Christ. In such a cause I would be willing to suffer every indignity that human nature is capable of inflicting. I would suffer the loss of all and the depri-

vation of life itself with joy. God grant me so to conduct through life.

Without thee, O omnipotent Jehovah I can do nothing; with thee I can do all things; can even remove mountains. With thine aid I hope to maintain this glorious warfare against the world, the flesh, and the devil, and at last to come off victorious. I have many times imputed the frequent use of divine appellations as a fault in the writings of good men, but I felt not as I now feel. Let no one be hasty in accusing, But God forbid that I should declare myself holy. By the grace of God I am what I am, and what I am I know not, God knoweth; the searcher of hearts knows what is in my heart.

My character I value not as I once valued it, but my conduct more. I must expect to be dishonoured, hated, and despised. Oh! that I could be worthy to bear reproach for Christ's sake. Let me but live near to him, have but his favour, and I fear not all the powers of earth and hell. It will be sufficient honour, superabundant and unmerited, to be acknowledged and approved by him in that last great day, before all worlds.

How deceived and how blind is man! O God enlarge my vision, more and more; withdraw the veil that has long darkened my eyes.— Be pleased, I humbly entreat thee, to give me clearer views of thyself and of eternity. Unveil thy beauties to my ravished heart, O thou One Supreme, as thou dost to thy secret ones, when admitted within the veil. Suffer me no longer to grope in ignorance, and be carried about with the craft and cunning sleight of many whereby they lie in wait to deceive.

I feel a desire to give myself up wholly to the study of Divinity, and to make the sweet service of God in which is perfect freedom, the business of my life; and to commence an ambassador of the heavenly court; for which I pray God fit and prepare so unworthy a creature, and make me serviceable in his cause. Glory to God.

Saturday April 10th, 1779.

This is a most glorious freedom, this is liberty; this through Christ strengthening me may I maintain through life. This is a cause worth fighting for, a liberty worth defending. Adieu, ye giddy world, adieu; when for trouble I have need, I'll wish for you. Adieu the pompous parade of this world, adieu; you are unworthy my notice. I would live above the world, while I live in it. I would be conversant with the world of spirits. My soul, as I would humbly trust, has taken wing and gone to Jesus. O glorious rest, O happy mansion. In thy strength, O blessed Redeemer, I defy the world, I defy the flesh, and I defy the powers of hell. Do your utmost all, in God I am safe, and shall trample you under my feet. Who would again be under such a yoke of bondage? strengthen me, O Lord. Forever shall I adore the goodness of the Divine Spirit, if I am enabled, as I humbly trust I shall be, to carry on this glorious warfare, to maintain this glorious struggle for liberty, a liberty becoming the sons of God. I have reason to prostrate myself in the dust, to lisp forth

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the praises of the ever blessed Redeemer; to adore the goodness of Almighty God, the riches of his free and sovereign grace to all eternity. What a helpless creature am I! 'Tis fitting I should be helpless; as Christ is strong, all is as it should be. Without him, I cannot subsist a moment; on him I depend for very breath, for all vital warmth in religion. 'Tis fitting I should. Enable me, O blessed Jesus, to put my whole trust in thee alone. O fill my soul with a sense of thy goodness, and ravish my heart with a discovery of thy matchless perfections. Enlarge my vision, and may I be near unto thee forever and ever. O most merciful God, no sooner dost thou withdraw thy ever blessed Spirit than my soul faints within me; I die, I shrink into nothing without thee. Give me large effusions of thy ever blessed Spirit, I humbly beseech thee. Support me, O blessed God, support me, by thine Almighty arm; uphold my weakness and make it strong by thy right hand, for through thy strength I can do all things: without thee I can do nothing.

Through the assistance of Christ I would lay aside, I would cast from me, every thing that can be the least hindrance, the smallest impediment in my christian course. I would divest myself of every incumbrance, free myself of every entanglement, and eagerly lay hold of every thing that may in any measure assist me, that I may run with swiftness, and come to the end of my race with joy, with peace and in haste. Blessed God, strengthen me this evening and ever. Through thy abundant goodness and mercy, may I not fear man, but, reverence and adore thee supremely, who art God over all, God blessed for ever more.

Lord's day morning, April 11th, 1779.

Sorrow endureth for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. At one time doubts and fears distract; but soon succeed serenity and joy, which the world can neither give nor take away. Praise to the holy co-eternal TRINE in the highest.

Full of imperfection, the evil one would try to elate me in order to fling me down, but I trust through Christ to trample him under my feet. Blessed God, give me humility; a meek and quiet spirit.

Contemn the world, ye that would serve God. How animating are the words of our blessed Saviour, Luke 6. 22, 23. "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 names as evil, for the Son of man's sake." This, though spoken to the apostles, is equally applicable to every one who professes Christ. He then proceeds, "Rejoice ye in that day and leap for joy; for behold your reward is great in heaven; for in like manner did their fathers to the prophets." Not only may it now be said, in like manner did their fathers unto the apostles, and what is infinitely greater, in like manner did they unto the Son of God himself, the second person in the ever adorable Trinity, the Creator of the worlds, the eternal Jehovah. This lesson is sufficient to make us value and esteem reproach for Christ's sake, as indeed it is, our greatest honour,

our greatest glory. Little do scoffers think they are doing us the greatest honour, and heaping up damnation to themselves.

Lord's-day Morning, April 11, 1779.

On what do I hope? To what do I trust? On what do I rely? I fear, but why should I fear? I trust and would hope, (I would speak it with great diffidence and reverence to the Deity,) that I have been enabled to cast myself entirely on Christ Jesus, the firm hope, the eternal God, the rock of ages. If this be the case, I need not fear. God knows best what he is doing with me. He knows infinitely better than I do what is best for me; and I pray that he would impart as he sees best.

Lords-day Noon.

Whether I am in a delusion I know not, but have some fears. I was once last summer in a delusion, but it lasted only a few hours. If this be a delusion, it has lasted more than a week. Good was God in discovering to me my error before; and if I am now deceived, I pray God make it known, and dissolve every power the devil may have over me.

That subtle adversary has never perhaps better success than when he transforms himself into an angel of light; but the Light of Heaven, the light of the world which came down from Heaven is sufficient to detect him. I pray that God, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift, would give me enough of this light to detect him. At times I fear I have gone too far in speaking of what is past to my intimate friends; but if God has enabled me to resolve thoroughly on serving him, I trust he will enable me to carry it into execution. Then I care not how soon the world knows it. Through Christ strengthening me, the world shall know that I fear God, and in spite of all opposing powers I will serve him. Help me to this O God.

Sabbath after prayers.

At times methinks my soul does leap for joy and rejoice in God my salvation. O that I could praise God as I ought; then the heavens should ring with acclamations. At times I feel pensive, full of thought. "The wind bloweth where it listeth." But I hope I am not like a wave of the sea. In the resolution I have formed through the help of God, I hope to remain firm unto the end; firmer than the everlasting hills, so that nothing, neither life nor death shall prevent, viz. to devote myself entirely unto God without the least reserve. Assist me blessed God.

The example of our blessed Saviour is sufficient to show the vanity of the world. He was born in low condition, and through life treated the pomp and glitter of the world with indifference. He knew the attachment mankind naturally have to the world. He knew its many allurements, and in his own character gave us a striking contempt of all; showing us how it ought to be esteemed, as a thing of no value compared with the glory of his kingdom; as a jewel fit only to be worn in a swine's snout.

The world steals into my heart, I grow torpid and dull. O God withdraw not thy Spirit, I beseech thee. Mortify me to the world, abstract me from terrestrial objects and grant that I may contemplate the Deity with ever fresh delight. O suffer me not to grieve thy Spirit. May it ever continue with me, never leave nor forsake me. O show me my vileness, humble me and cause me to lie low before God. Let me see what an abject and wholly depraved mortal I am ; and manifest unto me the infinite mercies and riches of Christ, and may I fall down and worship and adore thee forever and ever. O give strength and activity to my soul. Do thou, who, I would humbly trust, hast enabled me to begin to live to thyself, carry me on unto perfection. Perfect in me every Christian grace. O suffer me not to decay. Suffer me not to shrink back and fall away, for thy great name's sake. For by such conduct I should bring great dishonour on thy name. O leave me not, heavenly Father, for I am exceedingly weak and low. I am feeble and can do nothing. In thee is my strength. In thee I would hope and trust, O Immanuel. May my weakness be made strong in thy strength. I would rejoice in the Lord my salvation, and praise his name forever and ever. Praise him ye that dwell on high, who are not encumbered with flesh, who are not subject to temptation, who labour under no imperfection. I thank thee, O Divine Redeemer, who hath conducted me thus far. O leave me not here, but carry on thine own work ; send down thine ever blessed Spirit to strive with me, to strengthen and defend me ; and prepare me for the Comforter. O Lord what can I say, what can I do ? Assist me, teach me ; enable me to rely on thee ; on thee, on thee alone. Pardon every wandering desire on this thy holy day ; and O do as thou shall see best for me. May I be resigned and have my will swallowed up in the will of the Most High.

Letter to the Rev. Dr. Ezra Stiles.

Saturday, April 17, 1779.

Minister of Christ,

Through a desire of cheering your heart under its many sorrows, and that you may praise God who accepteth the praises of his children, I feel a strong desire to communicate to you what God has done for my soul. The subject of this note is such, that I trust you will pass over the inferiority of a pupil's station, for I know you cannot but love all who are loved of God. I have a desire to tell you because you can praise the Redeemer in more lofty strains ; I want to tell every child of God, because it will cheer their heavy hearts and raise their drooping heads ; and that they may give glory to God, my Saviour, my Redeemer, my exceeding great reward. I speak of the hearts of the children of God as heavy : truly a consideration of the unhappy human species makes them grieve, and a consciousness of their own unworthiness renders them humble ; but their hearts are ravished at times under a transporting sense of the Deity ; and the time will quickly come when they shall raise their heads above the stars.

I trust it has pleased God, through the Mediator, (forever praised

be his name,) to give me that *decisive* turn for eternity, for which you prayed:—to give me a sense of his beauty, glory, transcendent excellence and infinite perfections:—to ravish my heart with a sense of his divine goodness—with that love for the Deity which swallows up my whole soul, and will encrease to all eternity. I trust through Christ, that the ever-blessed God, has unveiled so much of his beauty to me—has given me such a relish for holiness, as this world shall not efface, nor time obliterate. The world has lost its charms, and through Jesus who loveth those that he loveth to the end, I trust I never more shall prostitute myself to its vile embraces. The world is subdued and God has all my heart. There is a peculiar feeling to all the children of the Most High, a Divine philanthropy, that renders them near my heart. In the blessed regions above, your company I hope to enjoy, and with you to traverse the starry pavements; but what is still infinitely greater—the presence of Jehovah, the fruition of the great God.

All this I would speak as in the presence of the Holy One, with great fear and reverence. My desire is that you would praise God for what he has done for my soul, and pray God to establish me, to keep underneath his everlasting arms for my support.

Thus writes, dearest and much respected sir, one of your pupils,
Z. ELY.

Doctor Ezra Stiles.

Monday noon, April, 1779.

When I am weak, then am I strong. When I have the greatest sense of my own weakness, of my utter inability to perform the least thing, even to offer a right petition, then I am brought to rely entirely on Christ; then am I strong.

I can look, or rather, I have been enabled to look back with pleasure, and behold a secret invisible hand conducting me thus far. At one time it has pleased the blessed God to convince me of one thing, at another time of another; to strike conviction in one place and in another, to dart in here and there a ray of light, all to prepare me for himself. All is as it should be. God knows how to time matters, and his own time is infinitely the best. Acquiesce O my soul in God, be humble and submissive and lisp forth praise,

Monday evening.

I know that my Redeemer liveth, and though after my death worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself and not another. Amazing is the goodness of God, that he should give me such sweet emotions! glory to God in the highest. May the eternal fruit of my lips be praise to God. While I have my life and breath I will praise my God, through Christ strengthening me.

He that is able to bridle his tongue is able also to bridle his whole body. The tongue is such an unruly member, full of deadly poison, a world of iniquity, which setteth on fire the course of nature and is set on fire of hell; that to whomsoever God giveth strength to bridle this, he will also give strength to bridle the whole body. Great God

assist me, strengthen, confirm and establish me, so that nothing shall separate me from Christ Jesus. Why need I fear? Through Christ I can do all things, defy the world, and make deists tremble. Subdue these powers blessed God, I pray thee; bring them all into subjection with my corrupt inclination and appetites.

Tuesday.

O happy marriage! Methinks I have been with the Bridegroom of souls, and that he has taken me into some of the chambers of his delights: glory to God. O that my heart might melt in gratitude to Jesus.

Peculiarly observable have been the transactions of God with me, that I might see that it was of him alone. Blessed be God, I would not arrogate it to myself. I pray he would enable me to give Him all the glory forever. At a time when I thought and knew not of it, after I had been very busy for several weeks, much taken up in study, he was pleased to create me anew. It was not when I set out, resolute in my own strength, to make a business of seeking him. I have been ready to determine that this or that should be the time, or never, but God's own time is best. May I ever be resigned to the will of the Most High.

Wednesday.

I hope I may venture to say, that for ten-thousand worlds I would not recede. Methinks I could not endure the thought of going through the world was it not for God. On him would I rely every moment. I pray God for his presence, and that he would strengthen, establish, and confirm me. May all my ambition be directed to promote the good of mankind, the happiness of the human race.

I pray God my relish for the world may not return: that He would teach me his sovereign will and pleasuse in all things; ever guide me by his unerring Spirit; and present to me this freedom, this glorious freedom. I beseech thee, blessed God, to preserve me unspotted from the world; mortify me unto things below. May I have my eye constantly fixed on the end of my race, and take only of the things of the world as I have need.

Withdraw not thy presence, merciful Creator. Forever adored be thy goodness for thy manifestations thus far. Preserve me—Have mercy on my friends and unvail some of thy beauties to them.

O I thank God, he has favoured me with every advantage. But these forever would have been in vain without the agency of his ever blessed Spirit. Glory be to God for his operations. Blessed God, fill my soul with love to thee, I pray thee. O warm my soul to devotion; assist me to praise. Shut out coldness and formality forever from my breast. Let the love of thy purity ever dwell there. What shall I render to my God for all his goodness to me. Assist me O Lord, and give me to place my entire dependance on thee.

Thursday.

Go on ye gentle hours, that waft my soul to God. I don't know but I may expect that it may be the pleasure of God to call me soon from this world, and place me in his immediate presence. What a new world I am in!

Afternoon.

My soul has been in a transport. I suppose this to be the twelfth day of my nativity. Saturday before last, I suppose I was married to the king of glory. Yes to the immortal Jehovah! I a worm of the dust—amazing! stupendous! wonder in heaven! The celestial hierarchies have shouted! The vaulted arches of heaven have rang with shouts!

You know not, A——, what I do and have felt! These are joys, which though they ravish the heart, do no saatite nor cloy. They are eternal delights, that ravish the soul in its inmost faculties.

Twelve days has the wedding been celebrating. How long it will continue in this manner God only knows. But of this I am certain, that all things will be ordered right.

This world has lost its charms. They have faded. Like dew before the sun they have faded. The epithets of beautiful, glorious &c. have long been inapplicable to things below. They are reserved more peculiarly to grace his awful name, who is the great I Am.

Friday.

O my dearest Lord I never can sufficiently thank thee. Eternity will be short enough.—Eternity! O transporting thought! My soul kindles at the thought. O my dear friends, my heart aches for you; ye will not be wise. I pray God withdraw but part of the vail and ye will stand amazed. Not for ten thousand worlds would I recede. O the comparison is infinitely too small. Language faulters—imagination faints! What views! O what ravishing transporting views! O blessed God, look propitiously on my feeble attempts to praise thee. Thy praise knows no bounds—infinite—eternal.

Saturday April 17th, 1779.

How ravishing is the feeling of love to the children of God! How near, how much like one's self. How excellent is the decalouge! What a beautiful transcript of the Divine perfections. Well might David call it his delight, and meditate therein day and night.

Never was a juster simile;—The wind bloweth where it liesteth, ye hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Not the purest fragrance of Arabia so regales the senses, as these gentle gales that blow from above and waft my soul to heaven:—to my God, my Jesus in whom my heart is bound up. Happiness before I never knew. What is called the happiness of the polite world I have experienced, but put all together from the first to the last, it would fall infinitely short of one moment's presence of the Deity. This is happiness without alloy. This is pleasure without a sting. This is a sweet without a bitter. O my friends, taste and see—taste and see that the Lord is gracious. Ye would loathe the world: ye would sicken at the thought of living here forever. The clock strikes ten; I will now pray and go to rest. I can now pray without its being a burden. I would not live without this privilege. O Lord, thou knoweth the overflowings of my heart to thee. I have once and again given up myself to God in

form and in word, but now I trust indeed and in power. I trust my God has at length ratified the covenant; that I am his and he is mine. O my beloved, I will seek thee whom my soul loveth, thou wilt be found of me. Withdraw not thy presence, O my beloved: without thee I cannot live. In thy presence is life and thy loving kindness is better than natural life.

There is something so amiable, so lovely and attractive in virtue and holiness as warms my very soul. O my friends, could you but see. Could but the veil be withdrawn! Did you but taste these sweet prelibations, you would not wonder that I am sick of love.

Sunday April 18th, 1779.

There is something so sublime in *pure* conversation that 'tis amazing that beings of immortal stamp should herd in such groveling societies, where all manner of impurity proceeds from their mouths. There is something elevating and ravishing to the soul in forming friendships for immortality. All the truly pious are on the same journey; their interest and their views are the same, however they may differ in a few speculative points: and the prospect of the continuance of their union forever gives it an indissoluble tie.

The perfections of the Deity and the ravishing delights of the invisible world are the favourite and most grand topics of conversation. Yet if we want a diversity (though those charming themes can never be exhausted, and 'tis the very nature of them not to cloy, but our connection with the world and the incumbrance of flesh renders variety necessary,) what ample room is there for conversation in the field of the sciences. Here are flowers. The mind may be charmed with a gay profusion.

There is an enjoyment which mankind in their natural state know not, taste not of; yea they conceive not of it, in their utmost stretch of worldly wisdom. There is a veil before their eyes. The fountain of wisdom is to them sealed up. Into the chambers of her delights they have no entrance. Yea they know not the way that leads to those apartments. Yet they fancy themselves at liberty to take them when they can find nothing better. Religion is not a gloomy, melancholy, sour, and ill-natured thing, as they imagine. Directly the reverse. She is cheerful but serious; is good will; is love without wantonness; pure love; for God is love. Love is the noblest affection of the soul, and when rightly exercised is the inexhaustible source of happiness, from whence those rivers of pleasure spring, that flow at God's right hand for ever more.

A blaze of light shines over the sacred word of God, which, though conspicuous as the sun, is never discovered by men in a natural state.

How amazing is the audacity of man, who arraigns God's justice and even defies his omnipotence; man that is a worm, a reptile of the dust! Why is not a thunder bolt from the throne of Jehovah commissioned to strike the presumptuous wretch to hell? Why is not this rebel world crushed into atoms!

'Tis because thou art God and not man. But let the guilty creature

know that vengeance sleepeth not, that damnation slumbereth not. O my God, may I never thus offend and blaspheme thy great and holy name. How sweet to the soul are the smiles of the Deity! What shall I render to my God? My days in praise shall all be spent.

Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth. Shall the clay say unto him that fashioned it, Why hast thou made me thus? Such is the condescension of the Supreme that he stoops to expostulate with man. Isa. 50. 2. Man doubts his power. He will not believe. Is my hand shortened at all that it cannot redeem? Or have I no power to deliver? And then proceeds to shew his terrible majesty. Man doubts the Divine veracity, the Truth in heaven. Isa. 45. 19. "I said not unto the seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain. I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right." The scriptures are full of the like; yet man will not believe. O most heinous sin of unbelief! ver. 23. "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness." O great God, let not a thought dishonourable to thee enter my heart.

Let not the old serpent get any advantage over me, let him not put thoughts into my heart dishonourable to God. To thee I cry, O hear my cry, my King and my God. The redemption of fallen man is a mystery into which the angels desire to look. Let me not think to fathom it. Sufficient is it for me to know, that thou art righteous, that thou art holy. To be still and know that thou art God becomes me. To fall down astonished at thy goodness, and adore thy name forever and ever. O Lord help me a poor weak mortal. Have not I put my trust in thee? Art not thou my eternal all? Isa. 51. What a glorious master! "Hearken unto me;" And what says my God? Read what follows. O it cheers my soul. ver. 4. "Hearken unto me:" and what says my God? read verse 5. "My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth," &c. How strengthening! verse 6. How seraphic and glorious! verse 7. "Fear ye not the reproach of men; neither be ye afraid of their revilings." My soul longeth for thee, O Lord, more than they that watch for the morning; yea, more than they that watch for the morning. If absent my dear Saviour is, all things within me seem amiss. Hide not thy face, O my God, for then I am all confusion. I live upon thy smiles, O Immanuel. My heart panteth for thee, more than the hart panteth for the water brooks. I find no rest until I have found my beloved, I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine. He feedeth among the lilies. The traveller panteth not so much for the cooling stream as my heart panteth for thee my God. My beloved is the chiefest among ten thousands. He is altogether lovely. Afford me thy presence, for thou art the health of my countenance. At what time I am afraid I will put my trust in thee. Thou art my shield and my defence, my strong tower and my hiding place; from storms a shelter, and from heat a shade. Thou art like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. I find no rest without thee, my beloved. Thou hast ravished my heart. O ye gentle messengers, wing your flight and bear my sighs away, and tell my beloved, I am sick of love. Tell him he has ravished my heart; and I cannot live without him. Tell him I think of him day and night, and relate the an-

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guish of my soul when he is absent. Hear my soft complaints, O my beloved; read the desires thou has excited in my breast. Behold at one time my soul leaping forth unto thee, and when thou dost smile, see my heart exult and leap for joy. When thou art absent, behold my despondency. See me a feeble creature, languish and faint away. See the tumult of my breast, if thou dost frown: I tremble, I am astonished. Thy smiles chase away the gloom of my countenance, and dispel the darkness that hangs round my eyes. My brows are smoothed, and the principle of immortality sparkles in my soul. My affections glow at the thoughts of fruition, and then the endless duration of that fruition, raises my soul in a transport. Come my dear Jesus!

Monday April 19th. 1779.

What an awful indignity mankind put upon the Son of God in rejecting him as a Saviour! When he has died and suffered on the accursed tree to save them, they will not acknowledge him. Therefore, "bring forth those mine enemies, who would not that I should reign over them, and slay them before me." "The Lord in vengeance drest, will lift his hand and swear, ye that despise my promised rest, shall have no portion there." I trust the Holy Spirit of God continues to teach me, which he has done for a long time; but never until of late has he ravished my heart with a sense of the beauty of holiness, the Redeemer, clothed in smiles. O most gracious God, Thou, who hast given me at times such a sense of thy boundless goodness, I trust will never finally leave nor forsake me; though thou mayest hide thy face for a short time. Though sorrow endureth for a night, will not joy come in the morning? Though for a short moment thou dost forsake me, yet wilt not thou with everlasting kindness, remember me? Hide not thy face O my God.

I rejoice that God is just such a God as he is; were he otherwise I should despair of salvation. The doctrine of free grace is the most glorious doctrine in the world, without which no flesh could be saved. Did life depend on any thing in us, we should be eternally damned. 'Tis not in us, yet we are to blame. This mystery confoundst he world. I pray God give me just apprehensions of it.

Scarcely a breath without a prayer, when our dependance is deeply realized. No one knows the name in the white stone but he that receiveth it. The most beautiful sight that could possibly be seen in this world would be to see the whole human race, every son and daughter of Adam, prostrate on their knees in humble adoration in prayer to God.

The clouds hung round me part of the day, yet blessed be God this evening my soul has been in the arms of Jesus, wrapped up in Divine love. O how sweet, how transporting! My Lord and my God! W— S—, and myself have spent this evening in a seraphic manner. We first took a long walk; then returned and spent till after ten in my room, as it seemed to me in an apostolic manner.

At times yesterday and to day, my heart has been almost desponding, or at least, doubtful; but, O the glory and triumph when

God reveals his face. The heavens cannot blaze in such brightness.

Pleasant to me hast thou been, O my beloved, to me a polluted mortal, but may I not say I am washed, I am clean. The garment of Christ's righteousness is a perfect covering, a starry vest, a royal diadem.

The truth of the scriptures, to the new man, is more conspicuous than the blazing Sun in the firmament in its meridian splendor.

'Tis beyond the power of words to convey what I have felt at times for this fortnight past. 'Tis God alone thus animates. O my friends I want you to taste and see how good *God* is. I frequently use this sacred name. There is something peculiarly sweet in it, however it might formerly have created terror. But great God, I would fear thee, I would reverence and adore thee; but yet thou art love. O my friends could you but taste and see, you would loath the world and sicken at all its pleasures.

I rejoice that God is immutable. O may thy blessed Spirit guide me into all truth. I think sometimes, is this a reality, am I indeed among God's children? But O my God, may I not say, 'tis a glorious reality. Do not I hate sin. Do not I love holiness; and thee, O my God with my whole soul? Would I offend thee for the world? Lord thou knowest. Should not I hate sin if there was no hell? Do not I love holiness' sake! O Lord thou knowest the thoughts which thou hast excited within my breast. O preserve me from the tempter.

Wednesday April 21st. 1779.

I find I have a foolish vain heart, that I am a very imperfect creature. The world seems to begin again to claim my attention, but I trust it never will have my admiration, esteem, or love again. I pray the blessed Spirit to guide me into all truth. And as I trust, I shall ever be actuated by a different temper, so I trust my course of conduct through life will ever be different, from what it formerly was.

Is it possible that after one hath been conducted into the chambers of delight, that after one hath been in the ravishing embraces of uncreated purity, in the arms of Jesus—I say, is it possible that such an one should be again taken up with the vanities of time and sense, and prostitute himself again to the world! The God of heaven forbid.

I spent last evening in a solemn pathetic, agreeable and becoming manner, with A.—B.—M. May such be the blessed business of my life.

The time has been, and most of my life too, when I looked upon religion as a burden, a task that must be encountered: but, forever blessed be God, the time now is that I am most happy when I am entirely alone, contemplating GOD and things Divine.

How amazingly absurd and wicked is the conduct of mankind in ridiculing one another. O man, who made thee to differ?

When I first came into town, I was much taken up with the beauties of Homer and Cicero; but beauties so transcendent have struck my attention since, that no room has been left for the former.

In looking over my old manuscripts, containing sketches of my

life, I find many petitions and expressions, from which one would be led to think me a different person from what I was. But in those I was not sincere! I rather made them out of reason and judgment, than because from *my very heart* I desired those things. I desired them because reason and revelation taught me that they were necessary to secure my salvation, and screen me from misery, rather than from any beauty which I saw in holiness.

Saturday, April 24th, 1779.

However cold and indifferent I may be at times, for which I have great reason to lament and desire to be humbled before God, yet I hope and trust that my firm, fixed, and settled resolution is, to devote myself entirely, soul and body unto God:—to cast off my every incumbrance, and every charm, which may be any annoyance, as I would a viper. To carnal repose I have long since bid adieu. I say long, for one day devoted to God is better than a thousand. The name of *pleasure*, according to the common acceptation of the word, I hate. Great God, make me a flame of fire. The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak. Almighty God free me from this amazing torpitude of body; give me animation in the glorious cause. I enlist myself a soldier under thy banner, King Jesus; let me fight, and defy the powers of earth and hell.

My only repose shall be in the arms of the dear Immanuel. There would I rest, as a traveller under the shade of a great rock in a weary land, to refresh myself and gain strength, to go on my journey with greater vigour and alacrity. O Lord my God, may thy strength be made powerful in my weakness.

Great God my flesh is amazing torpid, indolent, and inactive. O receive me, free me, strengthen me, animate me, or else I languish.

I feel a peculiar felicity in having every thing made subservient to the praise of the Deity, in having God praised for what he is in himself, or for any good done through my instrumentality. His is the due. O I would not have it otherwise. All ye who are profited by me praise God. Let him dispose of me in this world as he shall think proper, provided I am disposed of to his glory and the honour of his religion. I know that this will be the case, for as this is the greatest motive, it must necessarily influence the Deity. Happy is the thought, that at last, all shall turn to the glory of God; when all worlds shall be assembled! Transporting thought!

I am struck with the infinite reasonableness and fitness of all God's commands.

The Christian is not meek and lowly solely through a consciousness of his own unworthiness, but also through the desire and pleasure of transferring to the Deity every honour bestowed on him.

I have given my pen to God, and whenever I employ it, I am to remember to employ it for him.

I want to fly, if it be God's will, like a strong-lunged angel, and with the everlasting gospel in my mouth, proclaim the glad tidings of peace from one end of the earth to the other.

Be this my business, this my employment for life, to seek the eternal

welfare of souls, to fetch home lost deluded mortals unto Jesus, the great shepherd and bishop of souls.

Blessed God strengthen me, leave me not, nor forsake me. Let thy presence be with me, without which all is horrible and gloomy; without which I am filled with perplexity. Shew me wherein I offend, O Lord, and put evil far from me. Hide not thy face. Lift upon me the light of thy countenance which cheers my drooping spirits. Give me a greater sense of Divine things; free me from this torpitude, this inactivity; make me a flame of fire; touch my heart with the ethereal flame, the glowing transports of Divine love.

I greatly rejoice that the bloom of my life; the morning of my days, the flower of my existence, is devoted to God, my Creator and Redeemer. When one becomes religious in old age, it seems rather out of necessity, not of choice; but there is something beautiful in devoting the prime of our years, the vigour of youth, to the service of God. The youth who devotes himself to God, should it please providence to prolong his life unto old age, will have the most pleasing reflection on past life. *Si juvat meminisse labores*, how will it delight us to recollect a life spent in the service of God?

I love to hear God praised for what he is in and of himself; not solely for his merciful communications to the human race. Setting aside rewards and punishments and the astonishing dispensations of providence in redemption; our supreme love, our strongest affection, and our highest adoration would have been eternally due to God.

The beauty of holiness being considered, exclusive of rewards and punishments, and the vileness of sin, 'tis surprising that mankind are not captivated with the former, and that the latter is not the object of their greatest aversion. The beauty of holiness and vileness of sin being set aside, rewards and punishments alone considered, the conduct of mankind is truly astonishing. The depravity of our nature, the insinuations of the devil, and the allurements of the world being considered, that any are charmed with the beauty of holiness, so contrary to their nature, is equally, if not more astonishing! This is effected by Almighty power alone, through the agency of the Holy Spirit.

My attention has been much scattered on this, God's holy day. Had I but a just sense of it, considering what God is, and his goodness to me in particular, my eyes would stream with tears perpetually. Great God, give me a greater sense of these things. Pardon me for Christ's sake.

Sunday evening.

O I am ashamed, I am ashamed. What, shall the world again have entrance? This evening I have had some relish for vanity. O, abominable! The trifling occurrences of company affect me! O, infamous! What is feeble man! Great God forgive me. Crucify me unto the world. Slay every charm that binds me to earth. Take off my affections from every object that prevents their being placed on thee as they ought. O let me be swallowed up in contemplation of things divine. Let my will be swallowed up in the will of the Most High, and all be made subservient to thy glory. O Lord leave

me not, nor forsake me. Keep underneath thine everlasting arms for my support, O my God. Great God, my soul must cleave to thee. O leave me not, leave me not. Without thee, O thou One Supreme, who can live? O subdue my unruly passions and appetites.

Sabbath, May 2, 1779.

Prejudice has powerful influence. Such is the lamentable state of people living under the light of the gospel, that religion in general, especially among young people, is derided, is scoffed at. Thus being prejudiced in our youth, we are brought to love the thing before we love the name.

In the solemn transactions of this holy day I humbly implore the presence of God. When I think of such a polluted wretch coming to the table of the Lord, all is confusion and amazement; but, when I look to the merits of a bleeding Saviour, all is serene and clear. I humbly implore God that this day, more especially, I may appear in a garment of Christ's righteousness. O, blessed Jesus, cast over me the skirts of thy spotless robe. Bury my sins, and look upon me as pure when I approach thy table. O God, let me not be confounded nor ashamed. Give me boldness, I humbly entreat thee, O my Father, to declare to the world whom I have chosen, or, rather, who has chosen me and enabled me to choose him. O warm my heart, blessed God, when I stand before men and avouch the Lord Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to be my God. And let others do what they will, my God let me be thine. Grant, I humbly beseech thee, that I may never dishonour that sacred religion I am about to profess. O may I walk worthy the vocation wherewith I am called. As I profess to be a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, let me be so in reality. Subdue all pride within my heart and every corrupt inclination. Let me walk as he walked, as much as is possible for an imperfect creature. Let me take up the cross of a soldier, enlisted under the banner of king Jesus.

May I fight manfully and at last come off victorious through thine assistance, O Immanuel. Many, very many and powerful are mine enemies, but through thine assistance, O Immanuel (how sweet the name) I shall trample them all under my feet. O, I would tread on crowns, on sceptres, on kingdoms, and trample them all in the dust; when set in competition with thy favour, O Redeemer, I would set worlds at defiance. Who could take any pleasure in the apartments of a king, if he had not the king's favour? Would he not be afraid every moment of suffering the vengeance of the king's displeasure? What business has this fellow in my royal apartments? Are not these reserved for my favourites? Who would dare to use the king's treasure, if he were at variance with the king? Would he not fear and tremble? Would it not become such an one, not to touch, not to taste, not to handle, through fear of incurring the king's displeasure? O my soul is in a flame. Good God! How amazing is the conduct of man! 'Tis my ardent desire that mankind, my friends more especially, should feel as I feel. God be thanked, 'tis he that giveth me this sense. I could almost say with Paul, let me be accursed

from Christ for my friends, my kindred after the flesh. This expression must be taken in an hyperbolical sense; or if in a literal, it must have respect only to this life; and it would be extreme misery to be deprived for life of Christs' presence, and of the joys of the Comforter, his blessed spirit. But to think of being parted from Christ forever; death is in the thought! It cannot be endured. For did I think that death or any thing should separate me from the love of Christ, under such a sense of eternal things as I sometimes have, nature could not endure the shock, but would burst into dissolution. It would overpower one, and crush the frame. O my God, what am I! Grace! Grace! Lord continue and encrease my sense of these things. And O may I be indefatigable in the cause of souls. And as others encompass sea and land to heap up the treasures of the earth, so if it be thy pleasure, let me compass sea and land to gain souls unto Jesus Christ. I desire to be more resigned unto the will of God. Let my will be swallowed up in the will of the Most High.

May 2d, 1779.

In the 21st year of my age I became a member of the Church in Yale College, publicly gave up myself in covenant to God, and commemorated the death and sufferings of the Lord Jesus. I hope my great, firm, fixed and determinate resolution is to devote myself wholly and entirely to God. His will and pleasure in all things is now my study; the religion of Jesus, the business of my life.

Tuesday evening May 4th, 1779.

I think I never had such a sense of the power and majesty of God as this evening. Words cannot convey it. It surpasseth all my conceptions before. Behold the Deity seated high above all worlds, demolishing the material system and sitting in judgment! Such a sense of the majesty of God almost makes me faint."

[The foregoing papers from April 3d, to May 5th, 1779, the writer styled, "Some account of the four first weeks of the hopeful beginning of a new life." In Nov. 1808, he appended to them the following Note :

"The writer of the forgoing being now in the 50th year of his age, hath deeply to lament that he hath fallen far short of his hopes and resolutions when he first set out."]

May 13th, 1779. "I had some deliberation about visiting Lyme, my native place, during this vacation, for fear that want of employment would make my time pass heavily; but I rejoice that I was directed to come, for I found myself full of business, very agreeable business, and such as I hope will occupy my future life. I have been a good part of the time either buried in thought, or closely engaged in religious conversation. And whereas I thought I should spend my time uselessly both to myself and others, I have been agreeably disappointed, and think I never made greater progress.

In serious conversation with Miss E——, who had been under great anxiety, she appeared to receive comfort, and have the balm of Gilead poured into her wounded soul.

I attended a meeting in which nine persons publicly narrated their experience of that of which the world knows nothing. They gave me great satisfaction : but I have had some doubts, and am not yet satisfied about the propriety of declaring in public assembly what is done secretly within the soul. Does it not give sinners occasion to bring dishonour upon the sacred religion professed ? God is a being of great purity, and we must be careful not to offend his ever blessed Spirit. Though none but sinners ridicule religious experience, yet Christians ought to be careful not to give the enemies of Christ occasion to blaspheme. P—— appears to be born again ; and her eldest daughter hearing that I had entered on a new life, expressed great desire for conversation with me. How happily did I spend my time with these new heirs of the kingdom ! What would have been my case, had I come home with the same disposition I ever brought before ! How great would have been my coldness, how abominable would have been my ridicule ! O, I can never thank God enough, that he has brought me out of darkness into light, out of slavery into liberty. Glory to God in the highest.

Dec. 31, 1779. This day seals up another year to the general judgment. The mercies of the past year call for many thanks to Almighty God. Health and plenty have been bestowed on me. Once in the summer past God has preserved me when in imminent danger of drowning, and also when engaged in skirmishes with the enemy.* But above all, I hope God has bestowed on me the grace of life through Jesus Christ. This calls for abundant joy and rejoicing, and endless praise to God.

Jan. 1, 1780. I would begin the year with God, under a solemn consideration of the uncertainty whether I shall end it in this world or the next. I would give myself unto God for this year and forever, to be wholly employed in his service, and to be perfectly resigned to his will. Whatever befalls me, let me maintain an inviolable attachment to the cause of Immanuel, and be governed by supreme regard to his glory. The last year I have reason to think has been the best year that I ever spent : may this be vastly superior. May my sphere of usefulness be enlarged, and I be enabled to discharge every duty incumbent upon me. Whatever sicknesses or disappointments await me, let me remember, that God governs the world, and will order all things for the benefit of his children : that I am a pilgrim on earth : and that it is necessary I should be weaned from this world. Almighty God, be graciously pleased to afford me the

* He attempted to ford the river Housatonic; and his horse finding the water too deep, plunged so as to dismount him ; but finally dragged him to the shore by the bridle rein.

While the British were approaching New-Haven, July 5, 1779, he was employed at an advanced post in firing at them, in company with a few fellow students. He kept his station behind a tree, until he was left alone ; and before he was aware of it, a scouting party of the enemy, concealed under the fence, came very near him. He escaped, however, with the loss of his hat and coat in the chase in which he was briskly followed by bullets. It may not be amiss here to remark, that Mr. Ely was a steadfast friend to civil and religious liberty through the whole of his life.

influences of thy Holy Spirit, to enable me to do thy whole good will and pleasure, through Jesus Christ.

Upon a review of the last month, I find that secret prayer has either been neglected or very irregularly attended to, until within a few days. Notwithstanding I find, that God, of his free grace in Christ, has not forsaken me, but afforded me, at several times, something of his presence, and honoured me with opportunities of doing good to thoughtful souls.

Feb. 6, 1780. About two weeks of the time since the last sacrament, it seemed to me, I almost *lived*.

April 2, 1780. I have not that communion with Christ in the ordinance of the Lord's supper which I have ever anticipated. I do not understand this dispensation of providence, if I am united to Christ : may God teach it me.

May 30, 1780. On examination by the Association in North Guilford, I received license to preach the gospel. My sphere of usefulness is now enlarged as far as my abilities can possibly extend. I pray for a double portion of God's Spirit, that I may be enabled faithfully to discharge the great work committed to me. I think I have lately been brought to see that my dependance is on God, and not on the creature, more clearly than ever before.

July 2, 1780. This afternoon, publicly preached the gospel, for the first time, to the congregation under the care of Mr. Mather. My text was, Rom. ix. 20. "Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God?"

August 28, 1780. Having preached in Amity for seven sabbaths, yesterday I took my leave of them for the present. In the afternoon my discourse was directed chiefly to young people. I had more assistance, I think, than ever before in preaching. A number of young persons were considerably affected ; and, after preaching, I had ardent desires for their salvation. In the arms of faith and ardent prayer, I would bear them before God ; that he may redeem them from all iniquity. Thus far well ; but how can I describe the black shades of the picture ! What a scene of wickedness took place in my heart ! Pride exalted itself. I am and shall be in great danger from this enemy ; and may God keep me humble.

I feel encouraged, and determine, by the grace of God, to preach the gospel with all my strength, constantly looking to God for the effusions of his Spirit. O, may I be strong in the Lord ; and in the power of his might may I stand forth boldly in the cause of Jesus, and of precious, immortal souls, devoting to it my all, and valuing even my life as nothing."

Having thus entered on the work to which he had devoted all his powers, the subject of these memoirs was grievously afflicted with a nervous headache, which he brought on himself by too intense application to study.

It prevailed to such a degree as to threaten his life, and for more than a year prevented all mental labour, except that required when actually preaching the gospel. To recover his health, he set out on a journey to the south and west, September 14th 1780, and returned

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March 30th 1781. During this tour he preached every Lord's day, and frequently in the week, while, in consequence of his bodily infirmity, he was continually harrassed with the fear that he should be compelled to relinquish the delightful work of the ministry. After his return he writes thus :

April 4th 1781.

“Returned home to Lyme. This is a dark, heavy cloud, which hangs over me. I cannot see through it. It forbids my thinking of settlement, and commands me to resign all into the hands of God, whether for life or death; to be useful and honourable, or an object of pity. He seems to frown upon me, but in the end I may find this correction a mercy.

April 8. Preached in N——. God assists me, and gives me grace as fast as I have humility to give him glory: and his way of working humility in me is certainly the best. 'Tis strange that this heavy cross I have from day to day upon me, does not keep me down: but pride will rise. After any unusual assistance from heaven, some attack from Satan is pretty sure to follow. Close application for a little while fills me with pain. I must strive to divert myself, while I still view with tears the chastening hand of God.

April 14. I feel miserably, and yet must be careful not to study and distress myself, or I am an undone man. When I am called to preach, if God gives me any thing to say, I will speak.

April 14. Preached in the North Quarter. Previously I had a greater struggle and more anxiety than usual, because I was to preach in my native place. I feared that I should dishonour religion, and therefore interceded with the Lord. I trembled; but I think it pleased him to be with me, supplying me with matter, and raising me above the fear of man.

April 17. In preaching again I was carried through so as not to dishonour religion in the view of mankind, but for want of humility had no taste of the truth. I have strayed away from God, and found foolish applause.

I determined to fulfill the course of my ministry and sacrifice all to that.

April 22. Amity. I had some nearness to God in prayer; and then, I suppose by reason of sin working in me, I was more barren in sermon. I was in an agreeable frame of mind on Saturday evening and Sabbath morning. O when will it please God to give *the hearing ear!* I pray God to give me wisdom and boldness, that I may make a wise use of the affection which the people bear me; and that I may keep a steady course, aiming constantly at the glory of God, whether the breath of popularity blow high or low.

April 24. I feel weak in body, but strong in spirit. I wish to preach continually.* I want strength; I want a voice as strong as thunder, and melodious as that of angels. I see more and more the need I have to watch and pray. If watchfulness and prayer are

* His labours were most abundant during his whole life; and at this very time. Perhaps they conduced to his afflictive head-ache, which frequently returned upon him, until his house of clay was laid in the dust.

needful for common christians, they are tenfold more so for preachers of the gospel. How Satan watches for some occasion against us ! How many wait for our halting !

April 29. Too far from God ! O ! that I was able to study ; but God orders it thus. If I can but have some small taste of *the love of God to-morrow*, I shall be able to preach on that glorious, infinite subject. I must watch for the honour of God in all my performances, and see that I do not rob him to compliment worms of the dust. I must be both zealous and jealous for the divine glory ; and remember to preach humility with a humble mind,

April 30. Lord's day.

In the morning I had much anxiety, fear and trembling, lest I should be left to myself, to struggle in my own weakness. I got along, somehow, through the forenoon service ; but in the interval of worship felt wretchedly because I had treated such an animating subject, "GOD IS LOVE,"* with so much coldness and indifference. I thought I could not go on with the work in which I am engaged ; and felt desirous of shrinking from it : but I can never be thankful enough to God for the assistance of this afternoon. I think I bore it better than I usually have done, and was more disposed to give the glory to God. What an arduous, laborious, painful work is this of preaching the gospel by reason of this body of sin and death ! However, at times I take great satisfaction in it. Now the anxiety and toil of this day are over ; and what good is done ? This seems discouraging. When will it please God to make his word powerful ?

May 3. I find I am not attentive enough to the little ceremonies of politeness. I must walk with the greatest circumspection, to cut off occasion from all.

May 13th. Northampton, Mass.

Preached here with satisfaction to day: had freedom and ardour: tasted something of the sweetness of divine truth. Thanks to God that he forsakes not such a poor, proud wretch.

June 8. I have become lukewarm in religion. The things which remain are ready to die ; the rays are feebler and feebler ; the impressions fainter and fainter. Satan tries every way to lead me astray. When I was full of animation, I went too far, and wanted prudence. Now I am far on the other side. To recover health I have taken those steps which have led me away from God. Are not the smiles of God's countenance better than health ? Does not his presence refresh me more than all earthly good things ? I pray God purify my motives, and convert me anew.

June 10. Covet earnestly the best gifts, and yet show I unto you a more excellent way ! I had the *gift* of preaching, but not the *grace* ; and I have abundant reason to be thankful to God for the *gift*. My petition to-day was, I think, with some sincerity for the people's sake, that God would assist me ; not for my own reputation, but their benefit. In the afternoon I made a miserable piece of work of it.

* I never knew my father write on any thing but paper, except in one instance, and then he recorded in his pulpit, directly before the preacher while seated, " God is love."

June 13. The flesh pleads very hard that I should either quit preaching altogether, or else read my sermons, and make smooth work of it. The flesh wants amusements and the company of the gay and polite. If I am a minister and faithful, I must be much with old fashioned folks, which is disagreeable.

The spirit says, 'tis better to follow Christ, the apostles and martyrs in the narrow road of self-denial.

June 16. My mind has laboured much on the question, whether, considering the dignity of the ministerial office, it is my duty to preach in the present state of my infirmity and ignorance. Last sabbath it pleased the Lord to assist me, and that encourages me to proceed.

I think of the sayings of W——, that this is God's body, and that he will call me to an account for the use of it. I would nurse it for him: and, if I had them, would wear out a thousand constitutions in the service of Jesus Christ.

In preaching, I wish to have my ideas clear, distinct, and important; then to hammer them on the conscience, one after another; and then to clench them fast in the heart. My plan should be well digested, and all the parts properly arranged. My end should be constantly in view, and all tend to it as radii to the centre. I must labour to feel my subject, and never rest till the Spirit of God savingly co-operates. I must realize the truth, and have a greater sense of the preciousness of souls.

July 18. I wish to preach *Christ*, both as to matter and manner. In order to this I must have the Spirit of Christ. For this let my intercessions rise night and day. I must have the Spirit of Christ to understand the gospel, and to preach it with a proper temper. I would take the souls of all the congregation into my arms, and present them to the throne of grace, loving them like Jesus: then shall I preach to them with tenderness, zeal, and firmness. I never preach only when I annihilate myself and am swallowed up in my subject. But I too often hide my subject behind myself: I desire to hide myself behind my subject.

July 30. I think I bear the image of Christ in this respect, that, it is my ardent desire, day by day, to do good. I think I am willing and desirous to sacrifice my all to the same end for which Jesus left the realms of glory.

August 5. There is very little danger of my suffering for Christ's sake; for preaching the truth aright: but great danger of my suffering for my own sake; for preaching unsound doctrine; for speaking with an unjustifiable temper of mind. It is desirable to leave people nothing to be offended with but the naked truth.

August 12. I have such an amazing love of that idol self, that my indignation is raised against myself. I want to stamp myself in the dust, be pounded fine and moulded anew. O when shall I preach? Great God, what wilt thou do with me? Remember thy loving kindness on which I have hoped.

August 13. Do I not dishonour the ministry? Is it not my duty

to quit the business? Of all characters on earth, I would choose to wear that of a faithful minister of Christ. But to preach for the sake of support, and only to put on the face of sincerity, is abominable in the sight of God. What a solemn thing it is to deal with thousands of souls! How awful would it be to forward them to hell by my preaching and example?—Let damnation stare me full in the face and then I could preach.

Sept. 23. Preached in Lebanon from Isa. iii. 10, 11. “Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their own doings. Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him; for the reward of his hands shall be given him.” In the morning I reeled about, but God enabled me to preach, and I had a little enjoyment of him. I resolve to bear my cross in silence.

Sept. 30. Lebanon. The doctrines of grace I perceive are hardly relished here. I pray that I may be enabled rightly to understand and rightly to preach them, with tenderness and boldness.

Oct. 12. O that I could represent religion in its true, amiable point of Light! let me think how the Son of God would conduct, and then how I ought to conduct. But how infinitely I fall short in every character! Nothing will regulate conduct like love. Let me love every one as I ought, and learn to view myself and others as God views us.

Oct. 21. I am too much of a declaimer. I do not press truth home enough, and address myself to the heart and conscience. All I want is health and grace: and grace enough without health would do. I feel willing to have grace at the expence of health. In the evenings I preached to a room full, chiefly of young people, and had the exercise of gifts; I cannot say of *grace*. Others may be profited by my gifts, but unless I exercise grace I shall be like a tinkling cymbal.

Nov. 13. I was initiated into the office of Tutor in Yale College. I pray God that of his fulness I may be enabled to discharge the important trust. I am to consider the youth of my class, (40 in number) as entrusted to my care by God, to be educated for him.

Nov. 24. What a vast field for usefulness is around me:—a large class ready to receive instruction;—a congregation on the sabbath;*—and a circle of friends. O for a heart!—but I am so cold and dead!—I should be all activity; like a flame of fire in the service of God.

April 7, 1782.

I have now a call from Lebanon, and what will be my duty I know not. My ill health, some opposition, the insufficiency of the support offered, and my connexion with college, are objections against my acceptance of it. My inclination to give myself wholly to the ministry, the general union and the long destitute state of the congregation, are arguments in favour of it.

May 19. Preached in Lebanon. I had some enlargement in the morning prayer: but in the afternoon I was a stupid, unfeeling wretch. In preaching I have no just sense of what I say. I hope times of refreshing will come for me, and this people: for we seem all to be as

* While Tutor he supplied vacant congregations continually.

dry as husks, as barren as the Arabian desert, as cold as the frozen ocean. O! that God's grace would melt our mountains of ice!

It pleased the Lord to refresh me before evening. If I am to be used as an instrument of doing good, I must live a very holy life. I pray that no temptations may influence me to settle here or any where else until providence clears the way.

Let me beware of bold dogmatical assertions. My business is to suggest truth, to hold forth light, and let that bear sway.

July 2. One of my class has been to render an excuse for not preparing his recitation, and informed me in a very affectionate manner, that it has pleased God of late so to favour him with spiritual light, joy, and comfort, that he has been unable to study.

July 8. Branford. A woman came to converse with me, who appears to be under genuine convictions; and says she has been affected thus by my preaching. I hope she will be a seal of it.

August 5. I received this day a call from Branford. Temporal prospects are much more promising at Branford than at Lebanon. I pray God to direct me, and manifest his will to me and let me be influenced by pure motives. I am to look at spiritual and eternal good. I want to take the matter into consideration with fasting and prayer. At Branford every thing seems accommodated to my hand, prosperity holds out her smiles, and I have a prospect of doing more good to my family, of going through the world with much greater ease and affluence; but at Lebanon, a great flock has been for years destitute. Oh that the Head of the church would show me of what part of the flock I am to take care: but how can I take charge of others, when my own soul is in such wretched circumstances?

Sept. 9. My friends universally condemn my going to Lebanon and exhort to Branford. I am almost confounded with my weakness. I pray God to direct me.

Sept. 18. Gave my answer to Lebanon in the affirmative. After long and weighty deliberation on the subject, the state of my mind was at last this:—I was content to go Lebanon, or to Branford, or to neither.

Nov. 13. I was now ordained to the work of the ministry, and entrusted with the pastoral charge of the First Church in Lebanon.

At the time of ordination I had no special views of the work, but was rather stunned. For some time previous, I enjoyed more than usual tranquility. I desire to be useful and active in promoting the glory of God while I live, but I think I am far from being anxious to live long. Only let me live much while I do live. Solemn scenes are before me. If I live many years I must bury the good old fathers. O that the rising generation may be blessed with saving grace, or I shall be left almost alone.

Saturday, Nov. 30. I have felt wretchedly for two days past. I have been left in a measure of God to humble me for my pride. I have not had such a conflict for some time. What I shall do tomorrow God only knows. I have written one sermon and expect to attempt to preach in the afternoon without notes; and if God should leave me *****. If I could but keep near to God, and possess

a proper temper of mind, I could preach at any time. But I have been too vain, and full of myself.

Dec. 1. Preached from Mark xvi. 16, in the forenoon, and had some sense of my subject, something of the presence of God; and went through the service with pleasure and propriety. In the afternoon I had little sense of damnation, but was not confounded as I was afraid I should be. The fear of man has great influence over me. I love my own reputation, at times, especially with a few individuals, more than the salvation of the whole congregation, and that hinders me from doing my duty. I cannot preach God's word through fear of offending a few! I deserve damnation. I feel as if the whole congregation ought to stone me. I hope to do my duty in a better manner in future. I must keep my heart in better order through the week, or I cannot preach on the Sabbath. Last evening my heart seemed a little softened for a moment; when I thought how happy the woman who washed the feet of Jesus with tears, but spiritual pride dashed out those holy flames.

Dec. 8 In prayer and preaching in the forenoon, I do not know that I ever was more assisted. I had notes, but scarcely used them. I was enabled to speak with pertinency, freedom, and enlargement, but I wanted for humility and heart-melting compassion towards sinners. In the afternoon I had less freedom.

Monday, Dec. 9. Was sorry to find a difficulty about admitting a person to the church. I need much light and assistance from above to conduct aright in this important situation. I was in a devotional frame most of the day. In the evening two young men came to converse with me about joining the church, and I attempted to pray with them. The matter of baptizing the children of such as do not commune at the Lord's table, I must spread before the Lord.

Dec. 19. I have been labouring under such depression of spirits that I could not enjoy my friends nor relish life. This I must guard against by exercise and diversion. My business is very great, and I must rest my soul on the omnipotence of God. He can supply all my need: and in this my soul hath rejoiced. I must not take too much upon me, remembering I am nothing, yea, worse than nothing: but, through Christ strengthening me I can do all things; can resist the world, the flesh, and the devil; for all these conspire to prevent me from doing my duty. My people, I fear, will not bear the truth, but I have more reason to fear that I shall not preach it. If I do my duty faithfully, I must expect opposition. If I preach the truth clearly and press it on them closely, they must reject me or their sins. I pray God to prepare me to endure hardness like a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

Thursday, Jan. 23, 1783.

The Lord is remarkably present with me this week, thus far: but I fear I must soon descend from this pleasant mountain into some bristly wilderness. I am very happy, being sweetly swallowed up in the work of the Lord. R—— begins to think she has experienced a saving change; O. P—— manifests a disposition to search thoroughly

into her heart. Let me examine her whether her chief daily desire is, to see more of her own vileness, to abase herself and glorify God; or rather to secure her own felicity. I hope these are but the first fruits of a glorious harvest among the youth of this place. How shall I sufficiently praise God for what he has already done! I must give all diligence to cultivate this part of the Lord's vineyard, in which he has located me. The walls are sadly broken down, and Satan will be upon me if I attempt to build them up.

Jan. 24. This morning I was filled with ardent desires for the enlargement of Christ's kingdom among the dear youth of this place; attended with a conviction that the work of conversion is entirely of God. This conviction; however, did not in the least restrain my resolutions to do my utmost, looking unto God almighty. This evening I spent in my chamber, conversing with my young friends. I trust Jesus was present with us, and feasts our souls on the bread of life. I am transported with the roses which spring up under the feet of Jesus when he walks with me. The wilderness breaks forth into singing before him, and the barren desert becomes enamelled with flowers.

Jan. 27. Visited a sick woman. God gave me something to say to her, and he alone can open the understanding to divine things, and excite suitable affections: but I was assaulted with pride, because she spoke highly of the prayer I offered there last week. I knew before that prayer was good, for it came from God. Still I found when others told me of it, that it improperly influenced me. I was fearful this week the Lord would thrust me from his arms, in which I sweetly reposed myself most of the last; but if some foul enemy, particularly pride, does not enter my heart, the Holy Dove may continue still. I never embrace the Lord so closely but I wish to embrace him more closely: I am never so nigh him but I wish to be nigher. I find in myself the two contrary natures of man before and after conversion. The renewed cleaves to God, and presses hard after him; but the old Adam shuns his presence. This is not strange, for one loves him, the other hates him.

Feb. 13. I have had many fears about entering into a family connexion, lest my attention should be torn away from my great work to make provision for them.

March 23. O it inspires joy into my soul, and nerves my spirits, to hear that God carries on his work among the people of my charge. I hear that one who was awakened on the day of our first sacramental celebration, has hopefully met with a change of heart. I must search out all such beloved ones, and bring them forward to own their Lord and sup with him.

March 30. The state and conduct of my church is a grief of heart to me, and lies as a burden on my soul. Great abomination is in the midst of us.

April 5. I feel as if I could cheerfully and most freely spend my whole life in painful labour for *one soul*; but I am called to attend to a great number. To-day I was visited by a drinking member of the church. I felt tenderly in conversing with her, and would pray that she might be reclaimed.

April 10. I find I must loose my reputation with the great and wise of the earth, if I preach up the power and life of christianity. The divine presence was with me in visiting several families: I love them all, and find that my affection takes deeper root. It gives me great pleasure to see some dear youth pressing into the kingdom of heaven. I wish to live for their sakes, to break unto them the bread of life, much more than for my own. The thought of becoming cold and stupid in religion, and being taken up with the world, is more dreadful than death. I have many doubts and fears frequently darting through my mind, lest my views of divine glories be only like those of Balaam. I want my heart should burn within me, and that religion should drink up the very life and vigour of my soul.

May 1. Resolved to treat the people of my charge in the most kind and tender manner, and to do them all the good I possibly can, though they should treat me in the most ungrateful and unfeeling manner, and deny me support. Resolved to overcome my enemies with kindness if possible, and to do all the good in my power to those who injure me as far as they can. Resolved to wait on the Lord without distraction, and attend to the business of my ministry to fulfil it, should it cost me all my patrimony in addition to my salary.

May 11. Had some animation in the service of the afternoon, and desire to be nailed to my duty, so that I may not get away from God. After meeting, I felt wretchedly for some time, then was more calm after a little while was refreshed, and in family prayer had sweet freedom and animation. In the evening I had some ardent desires after perfection, and thought I would willingly suffer any thing, if I could always feel such promptitude to do my duty as I sometimes experience. I longed for ministerial perfection; and resolved to make preaching my main business; to study my sermons thoroughly; to have them fixed in my mind as much as may be; and then to endeavour to deliver them as becometh the gospel.

May 19. Felt estranged from God. How great has been his kindness towards me! Shall I now stop in the race? Shall I not press forward? On the grace of God am I dependent both to will, and to do. I must fortify myself against *flattery*. What have I that I have not received? and what have I that I have not abused? Where might I have been, without any injustice done me? even in hell.

May 21. O temptation! O broken resolutions; broken vows! How do I offend God! O that I might have repentance given me, and that the blood of Christ might wash out my stains. Truly, I deserve to be damned; and yet, if I am a child of God he will not *punish* me for one of my sins: he will only correct me in measure and in mercy. How ought this consideration to cause my heart to bleed!

Oct. 23. 1783. Was married to Sarah Apame Mills. Before marriage, I had a solemn affecting sense of the connexion I was about forming, and felt ardent desires that it might be for the glory of God, and that we might have his presence in joining hands for life. I have been at many marriages, but I never saw such a solemn one. I thought of the new duties, new temptations, cares and troubles, and of the parting scene.

On the following morning, I preached a solemn sermon to my friend, and in prayer together we consecrated ourselves to God, to take up the cross and serve him in the work of the gospel ministry.

Oct. 31. We arrived at Lebanon, and were received, without parade, in a very friendly manner, with the overflowings of generosity.

Nov. 1. Spent considerable time in prayer, was much affected, and endeavoured to consecrate myself, my friend, my house, my all to God, and implored his blessing upon us. O may we have a single eye, aiming at the glory of God. If she will not go with me, I am and have been resolved to go alone: but I trust she will not be left behind. I hope she will aid my flight.

April 25. I am in great danger of falling in error, in sentiment and practice. I must deal fairly with mankind; I must take sinners as they are; not thinking to make them perfect at one blow. I must take the wisest method to prepare them for heaven.

May 7. I have this afternoon and evening had a trying scene. Three persons persist in being admitted to join the church, who will not as yet engage to come forward to the Lord's supper. Their views do not appear to be sanctified. O may God teach me my duty, and carry me through it. I have been enabled to speak to them plainly, boldly and feelingly: and now each to his own Master, must stand or fall.

June 4. 1820. Alas! alas! I feel so unqualified for my work, that I am ready to think I must relinquish it, and give way to some younger and better man. I wish to be directed in the way of duty. I know the Lord can strengthen me, can animate my drowsy powers, and make me shine bright in the decline of life. But I seem in a great measure left of God to struggle with my own weakness. In the evening however, I was enabled to discourse on the inspiration of the scriptures, and I hope it was not a lost opportunity.

June 27. My feet suddenly slipped on the door stones, I fell and dislocated my collar bone. I view this as a righteous chastisement from the hand of the Lord. O that it may answer the desired end, and that the fruit thereof may be to take away sin.

July 16. My arm continues very lame; my head is much disordered; and my heart is in the worst state of all. I have hard conflicts in my own breast. I pray God to grant me the influences of his Holy Spirit, that I may get the victory over every sin. In what an awful situation should I be, were I given up to my own heart's lust! Let it never be the case. I pray that I may become more spiritual, holy, and heavenly: that I may be weaned from the world, and refined for a better state.

Oct. 22 Preached on the signs of the times, and was troubled with my infirmity, in my head. In addition to my head ache, I experience at times the effect of my indisposition in Mr. Fisher's pulpit, which I am more and more inclined to think was a paralytic shock. It impairs my speech and my recollection. It did to-day. My active usefulness appears to be drawing to a close. May the Lord in mercy prepare me for all events; but oh! may I not be left to fall as a dead weight on society."

The foregoing extracts sufficiently disclose the heart and life of him who wrote them. During his whole ministry of forty years, he was diligent and laborious; seeking the salvation of souls; and pressing after more intimate communion with God.

His small salary and large family, consisting of twelve children, who arrived at manhood, rendered it requisite for him to cultivate a farm. This was a lasting source of regret to him, because he wished to devote his whole time to the appropriate work of the ministry.

He was blessed with several very considerable revivals of religion among the people of his charge; and with one a short time before his death; during which, from feebleness of body, he could only say, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace."

The greatest trials, which he ever experienced from any outward source, arose from the division which took place in his large congregation, about the location of their meeting house; and from the return of an ex-minister to reside in his parish. In the spring of 1804, the people living south of his place of worship were desirous of painting it; but the people living north, with few exceptions, had resolved that the building should be taken down, and a new one erected in a more central situation. The venerable wooden church was demolished in a riotous manner, and soon after the Legislature of the State divided the parish into two. My father had his choice of continuing to be the pastor of the one or of the other Society; and so prudent had he been during the hot contention of the parties, that each was disposed to claim him as Pastor. He thought it his duty to remain with those who were attached to *the old foundation*, and they erected on the same a handsome brick edifice.

The ex-minister, who proved a thorn in his side, had been for many years the pastor of a church in a neighbouring State, but for reasons best known to himself chose to relinquish the preaching of the gospel, while his vigour of body and mind were yet unimpaired. Returning to Lebanon his native place, with a certificate of good standing he applied to Mr. Ely for admission to church privileges, as a private member, and was cordially received. Some members of the church, who were dissatisfied with the man received, thought their pastor had prematurely enrolled him as a communicant. He became ere long the subject of discipline, and in the process was alienated from the person who had cordially received, and so far as he thought it lawful, countenanced him. The unhappy consequence was, that the ex-minister, after creating as much disturbance as possible, and openly insulting the pastor in the sanctuary, was excommunicated, and then brought his own bread and wine to church and pretended to celebrate the Lord's supper by himself, in his own pew. During all his troubles, Mr. Ely manifested great meekness of spirit. Once indeed when Mr. ——— loudly reviled him, after he had entered the portico of the meeting-house, my father said, "let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him," and this was the only retort he was known to make, during some years of contradiction and insult.

Under date of Feb. 24, 1822, he remarked in his diary, "I labour under infirmities, and have many mercies. I have to lament

my own stupidity, and the deadness of the people of my charge. The indecent conduct of Mr. ——— is greatly to be lamented. That he should be deposed by the consociation, then excommunicated by the church, and that it should work no repentance, no reformation in him, gives reason to fear that his case is a very awful one. That he should assault me as I am entering the sanctuary, call me a lying rascal, a plaguy old fool, and denounce me as a liar to have my portion where all liars go, is provoking: but I think I feel no unsuitable resentment, and sincerely pity and pray for him. May the exalted Saviour in his infinite mercy grant him repentance, and restore him.”

Although Mr. Ely, was rarely well of a nervous head-ache, and able to obtain regular rest in sleep, for a whole week at a time, yet I do not remember that he ever had more than one dangerous sickness, before the last. He was once visited with the typhus fever; and when his life seemed fluttering to be gone, he told me that death had no terrors for him; that he had long contemplated it familiarly; and that for more than twenty years, God had not been out of his thoughts one hour at a time, during his wakeful moments. All who knew him could testify, that he walked with God habitually.

It was a paralytic affection which finally removed him from the world. This first made its appearance on the 11th of October 1818. He had gone to assist the Rev. Jesse Fisher, whose wife was then at the point of death; and who thus writes: “Mr. Ely went to the meeting house apparently well; though afterwards he told me his head ached. He arose to ask a blessing on the services, and spake but a few words before he began to hesitate, dwelt upon a word, repeated it several times, and then was unable to articulate. He stepped down and signified by a motion of the hand, that he wished me to proceed with the exercises. I read a chapter, and by that time he was able to speak, and observed to me, that he thought it doubtful whether he should be able to afford me any assistance. He said, after prayer, he would attempt to read a hymn, and if he found he could speak he would preach. When he got up to read, his speech appeared to be perfectly restored, and he performed all the rest of the exercises of the day. Before he named his text he very pertinently and feelingly addressed the congregation, and told them what he thought of the attack he had just experienced, and that it was a warning that his use was drawing to a close.”

He continued to perform his usual parochial labours, however, until August 12, 1821. He then preached from Acts xxvi, 28, 29. “Then Agrippa said unto Paul, almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.” &c. After this, his *persuading* voice nearly departed; for he was, in the evening, rendered speechless, and continued so until the Saturday following. His brethren in the ministry kindly assisted him in supplying his pulpit, until the 21st of October following, when he was able to resume his public ministry, and generally preached at least once in the week, until March 9th, 1823, on which day he delivered his last discourse from the pulpit, from John xiv. 6. “*Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.*”

After this period his powers of body and mind seemed gradually to decay, until, on Nov. 18th, 1824, he sweetly fell asleep in Jesus.

The same characteristics which had marked him during his most healthful moments, were apparent through the years of his waning. Nothing delighted him so much as the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, and of nothing did he freely and familiarly converse but of the doctrines of the Bible or of experimental religion. It was his greatest fault as a pastor that he could not be sociable on any other subject. This rendered his company forbidding to all but pious people; and he frequently lamented this propensity to silence. A brother clergyman who knew him well remarked; "that he had always found Mr. Ely affable and unusually communicative, because he had always proposed to him some important religious questions: but your father," continued he, "with most persons, is like a traveller who has large bank bills in his pocket, and no small change."

He compensated for his taciturnity in part by writing letters with great facility: and by their instrumentality, there is reason to believe, that he won several souls to Jesus. In some instances he had the pleasure of learning twenty or more years after the delivery of some of his discourses, that they had been blessed to the conversion of some of his hearers. I remember to have heard him relate this anecdote. He was once induced to ride thirty miles on a very stormy Saturday that he might accommodate the Rev. Mr. Williams in the exchange of pulpits. He had but few hearers on the Lord's day, and afterwards frequently thought he had been foolish to take such a journey to preach to few people, when he might have addressed a large assembly had he staid at home. Nearly twenty years after, he fell in company with a gentleman whose piety was strongly indicated by his discourse. After they had travelled together with great satisfaction for some distance, the gentleman asked him if he remembered to have preached in E—H— at such a time. He replied, "yes, and I often have thought how foolish I was to leave my own congregation, and ride thirty miles in a storm to preach to a dozen people." The gentleman rejoined, "But your sermons that day, were the means of my being awakened and hopefully converted; and ever since I have lived a new life."

Never after this could my father think any journey too long, any audience too small, for the preaching of the gospel.

So earnestly did he desire that his people might continue to enjoy the benefits of public ordinances, that soon after he became materially disabled he relinquished all of his salary but one hundred dollars, on condition that the congregation would appropriate it in procuring supplies for the pulpit, or some co-pastor of the church.

During his whole ministry, Mr. Ely was ever striving to become a better preacher and a more faithful pastor; and yet few have been more faithful, exemplary and devoted. He was never satisfied with reading his discourses, nor with preaching extemporaneously without study. His voice, which was naturally weak, became, by attention and exercise, clear and full; and his articulation was so distinct that if the partially deaf could hear any one, they could hear him.

His theological opinions might be denominated Calvinistic; and yet he called no man master in matters of faith. In early life he was familiarly acquainted and connected with divines of the old school; and when he entered on his public ministry, he had friendly intercourse with Dr. Bellamy, Dr. Hopkins, Mr. Stone, and other worthy men, who have since been styled Hopkinsians. Once in conversation with Mr. Stone, he said, "your system runs into ——." "Well, well, replied Mr. Stone, do not cut truth's legs off: let her run where she will." This my father ever after considered as a rule in his investigations; and perhaps he was the more scriptural in his views, from the fact that he studied divinity between *the old light*, and *the new light* schools, without being the partisan of either. The Bible, with him, in matters of opinion was every thing; and human traditions and authority nothing. The peculiar tenets of the Hopkinsians he rejected; but was the advocate of a general atonement, a particular election, a particular redemption, pardon through the atonement, justification to life through the imputed righteousness of Christ, and all the other fundamental doctrines of grace.

The course which he pursued for himself of hearing all sorts of truly Christian divines, proving all, and forming a system for himself, from personal examination of the sacred oracles, he strongly recommended to others; and what he knew not on earth, he now clearly knows in heaven.

It was long his earnest desire to die in the midst of his usefulness: but in this the Lord did not think best to gratify him. After he became infirm, so long as he could speak any thing, he expressed strong desires to depart and be with Jesus: while at the same time he meekly submitted to the divine will.

Far from this world of toil and strife,
He's present with the Lord:
 The labours of *his* mortal life
 End in a large reward."

Appendix.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE FUNERAL

OF THE

REV. ZEBULON ELY,

Nov. 20, 1824, by the

REV. SAMUEL NOTT, A. M.

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH IN FRANKLIN,
CONNECTICUT.



JOB XI. 7—9.

Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as Heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.

That there is a power above, an enlightened heathen said, “nature cries aloud through all her works:” and the inspired Psalmist saith, “The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handy work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.” Paul, the great Apostle to the Gentiles, adds, “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.”

The light of nature and divine revelation, both teach this fundamental truth, **THERE IS A GOD.** The interesting inquiries and affirmations in our text are made concerning **HIM.** *Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth and broader than the sea.*

The interrogations imply the strongest negations, as though it had been said, *you cannot find out the Almighty to perfection.* “It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?”—With the greatest propriety does the Psalmist say “If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.”

As rational creatures, we are capable of seeing the evidence of the divine existence, and of knowing something of the divine character and government; but are totally unable, *by searching to find out God, to find out the Almighty unto perfection.*

This will appear from the following considerations.

1 *We cannot find him out to perfection in his works of creation.*

We are very forcibly struck with their greatness and grandeur, but we can neither tell how *God made all things out of nothing*, nor why, he did not create the world earlier, so that it should be nearly twelve, instead of six thousand years old. "He commanded and it stood fast—He said let there be light, and there was light." Thus much we know.

We cannot even tell *how* God separated the land from the waters; *how* "he compassed the waters with bounds," *how* "he gave to the sea his decree that the waters should not pass his commandments."

Neither can we tell how God formed creatures, of such different natures, that they can live quietly and happily, some on the land, others in the water, and some, either on the land or in the water.

We can no better tell how things grow out of the earth, especially, how things of totally different natures grow, side by side, upon the same soil. We cannot even tell how living creatures move in the manner they do. Some creep, and others walk on the face of the earth. Some swim in the sea, and others sail in the air.

The challenge which the Lord made to Job, may be made to every man, even the greatest philosopher that ever lived: "Where wast thou when I laid the foundation of the earth? declare if thou hast understanding? Who hath laid the measure thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof? when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy? or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb." The earth and the seas, and their inhabitants are full of mysteries. Mountains and vallies, seas and rivers, rivulets and springs, insects and reptiles, birds and beasts, all have their mysteries. We are, indeed, a mystery to ourselves. "We are fearfully and wonderfully made?" We have powers and faculties, both of body and mind, far above our comprehension. We feel, think, reason, move, speak, and exercise our conscience about right and wrong, but cannot tell how. The union, likewise, of our souls and bodies, is totally above our comprehension. So is the manner in which they affect each other.

The heavens over our heads, are, likewise, full of mysteries.

How wonderfully are they *ornamented!*—How useful are these ornaments! The sun is the source of light and heat. It rules by day, and the moon and stars by night. Who can even tell the composition of the heavenly bodies, or their exact magnitudes? Who can tell the number of the stars, or why they were arranged in the system just as they are? What philosopher perfectly understands all the constellations, and their locations and importance?

2. *We cannot find out the Almighty unto perfection in his providence.*

That, to use the words of Zophar in our text, is as high as heaven! What canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth and broader than the sea.

The providence of God is so incomprehensible, that even Paul exclaims, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and know-

ledge of God ! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out !”

God’s providence is both general and particular. He sways the sceptre of universal dominion. All things in *Heaven, Earth, and Hell*, are under his controul. He causes, not only the revolution of the earth but the swellings of the sea. Every mote that flies in the air, and the smallest thing that floats upon the mighty deep, is directed by him.

All animals, and birds, not only those of the largest, but even those of the smallest *size*, share in his providential care. He directs the Eagle in his lofty flight, and the ephemera that hover round a *marsh*, for a day, and are no more. He governs all the monsters of the deep, and the little fish in every pond and rill, as well as the peasant in his cottage, and the king on his throne. Christ saith, “Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.”

Summer and winter, spring and autumn, seed time and harvest, all take place by divine directions, with all their variations; but we cannot fully comprehend how they take place. Or why one season enjoys frequent and fertilizing showers, while another is parched with consuming drought. Or why one rewards the husbandman with abundant harvests, while another scarcely supplies his necessary wants. Or how the vapours are exhaled from the earth and sea, and shed down again to refresh the withering plants of the garden and the field. Or how he hath begotten the rain, hail, snow, and wind. Or how *the Lord rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm*. Or how, at one time, he gives the gentle shower, and at another, sends the sweeping deluge, or the tornado, laying fields common, and prostrating both fruit trees and forests. Or how he suddenly, and awfully, sometimes, destroys by an earthquake, a village, town, or city.

We cannot find out the Almighty unto perfection, in the multiplication, location, or preservation of the various tribes of men, beasts, birds, insects, and reptiles; nor how he preserves life in those that are in a *torpid state* a considerable part of the time. We cannot even tell why, some of our own race are born in a country where the soil is rich and fruitful, the waters pure, the air salubrious, and others, where the soil is poor and unproductive, the water bad, and the air unhealthy ! Or why, some persons always eat the fat and drink the sweet, while others are made to feel all the horrors of poverty; or why, one person has good health, and another is sickly ! Or why, one has the use of his reason, and of his limbs, whilst another is insane, or is a cripple, from a *broken bone, or a foot out of joint*.

Neither can we tell why, in the same country, or, indeed, in the same family, some persons have both sound and cultivated minds, whilst others, in both respects, are mere *dwarfs*. Or why, one man is brought into public view in the church, or state, and acts an useful and honourable part, whilst another is kept in the more humble walks of life, and never does any thing worthy of particular notice. Or more especially, why one person is removed by *death*, whilst another is continued a *prisoner of hope*. Or why one is written a *widow* or an

orphan, whilst another continues to enjoy her companion, or parent. All is mystery!—*We cannot find out the Almighty to perfection!* It becomes us, therefore, in view of every affliction, and especially, in the view of very dark and mysterious providences, to bow with reverence, and say: “*It is the LORD. Let him do what seemeth him good.*”

What shall we say, with respect to the introduction of moral evil, into the universe, the fall of a part of the angels, and of all our race?—Their moral beauty is gone! “They have forsaken the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.”

In consequence of moral evil, the fallen Angels are “are reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness unto the judgment of the great day,” and mankind are exposed to sickness, pain, and death; not only temporal, but eternal.

It is true, grace has interposed, and God is shewing mercy unto some of our race, whilst he is passing by others. Some are born and educated in a christian country. They have continually, *life and death* set before them in the gospel. “The Spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that heareth say, come. And let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take the waters of life freely.”

“Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money come ye buy and eat: yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price.” Others are born and educated, indeed live and die, in a pagan country, in “*the shadow of death.*” What shall we say in view of all this evil? “*Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.*”

Notwithstanding, our race are distinguished from the fallen angels, *are prisoners of hope, yet, during their state of trial, individuals, families, and nations, are constantly exposed to many and very heavy trials. The virtuous are exposed as well as the wicked.*

The history of *Joseph* is familiar to you all, and is wonderfully calculated to show the instability of the world, and the inscrutability of divine providence. He was sold by his envious brethren to the *Ishmaelitic merchant men*, carried down into Egypt, sold again to *Potiphar*. and eventually cast into prison for resisting the temptation of his *abandoned Mistress*. Eventually, he was, in a very extraordinary manner, delivered out of prison, and exalted to be the second man in the kingdom. How mysterious!—*We cannot find out the Almighty unto perfection.*

The famine in Egypt and in the *region round about*, which followed *Joseph's* exaltation, was mysterious. The going of his brethren down into Egypt to buy corn, which, under the guidance of God, he had the sagacity to lay up, *during seven years of plenty*, was equally mysterious. So were all the trials through which they passed, as stated in the interesting narration, till *Joseph* made himself known to them. So was, indeed, their moving into *Egypt*, with their aged father, and settling there: their subsequent sufferings, by the oppression of the Egyptians, their final deliverance out of their hands, and the utter destruction of Pharaoh, and his host in the Red Sea. Those were all

most wonderful events, and constrain us again to say, *We cannot find out the Almighty unto perfection.*

The whole history of the Jews, from the calling of Abraham, until the capture of their city by *Titus*, the destruction of their temple, and their dispersion among the nations of the earth, has much of mystery in it—much that we do not understand. They have been a *by-word* for almost eighteen centuries. Judicial blindness has attended them. The scales only just begin to fall off their eyes.

Our country, not known to their fathers, has the honour of offering to them an Assylum. How unsearchable is divine providence!—*We cannot find out the Almighty unto perfection!*

There is much in the history of *Job*, *David*, *Mordicai*, *Jeremiah*, *Shadrach*, *Meshach*, and *Abednego*, *Daniel*, *Jonah*, *Stephen*, *Paul*, and many others, left on divine record, that we do not understand.

There is no need, however, of going back to ancient times to find mysterious providences, things too deep, for us to comprehend. They are to be found, in every age. They exist daily before our eyes. One person is *sick*, *lame*, *blind*, *deaf or dumb*, and not unfrequently entirely useless, but still drags out existence, to a miserable old age. Another in the midst of health, usefulness, and worldly glory, is stopped in his career. It is said to him, “*this night shall thy soul be required of thee.*”

We often see those persons, who are the most useful, in the civil and religious departments of life, utterly laid aside from business, or removed by death, whilst others, much enfeebled, by age and infirmities, are continued, apparently, to try the faith, and patience of themselves, their friends and the world. Judgment is God’s *strange work!*—“Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.”

In this world, the fairest prospects are often very early blasted. It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding.—For riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away, as an eagle towards heaven.” The most wonderful things, in a short time, often take place, with respect to *health*, *wealth*, *reputation*, and even *life*. The Evangelical Prophet, saith, “All flesh is grass; and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: Surely the people is grass.”

We often see persons, with the most flattering prospects of wealth, honour and usefulness, hurried, by some fatal disease, or some unexpected providence, from the most honourable, profitable, and useful stations, to the grave, and the world of spirits. “As the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and the birds that are caught in the snare, so are the sons of man, snared in an evil time.” We see others, in the most distressing circumstances, and with the most gloomy prospects, continued.

The scenes of life, whether prosperous, or adverse, are continually changing. Riches are exchanged for poverty, honour for disgrace, friends for enemies, equipage for simplicity, life for death:

The wise king in Israel saith, "I have seen servants upon horses and princes walking as servants, upon the earth." God's judgments are a great deep.

3. *We cannot find out the Almighty to perfection, in the kingdom of grace.*

It is, truly, most astonishing, that *he* should pass by the apostate angels, and provide a ransom for men, a lower order of beings! The way, that infinite wisdom hath chosen for the redemption of believing sinners, is likewise, most astonishing. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Paul in his first letter to Timothy saith, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of Angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. This is the greatest of all mysteries! It is a mystery, that God should be willing to give his Son to be a *sin offering*, to die for rebellious men, and that Christ should be willing to undertake the work. He said: "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God." His love, was "*love which passeth knowledge*. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

It is likewise a mystery, that the gospel should be preached to one nation, family, or soul, and not to another. One person, daily hears the joyful sound of the gospel, *has line upon line, and precept upon precept*, and is nurtured, as in the bosom of the *Church*; whilst another knows not that there is any gospel; and is trained to *sin* in some *Pagan Temple*. Even to this day, there are, as many suppose, *six hundred millions of Pagans!*

It may be added, that it is a mystery, that some, who preach the gospel, are continued long on the *watch tower*, crying day and night, to their fellow sinners, *this is the way, walk ye in it! Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways, for why will ye die?* whilst others are, early *laid aside* from their labours, or are called to the bar of God!

What is equally, mysterious, is that the *Holy Spirit* is sent down to awaken, and renew, and sanctify some, sealing them to eternal life. "Christ is made of God unto them wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption," whilst others *quench the Spirit*, and *will not have Christ to rule over them*. They *have eyes, but see not, ears have they, but they hear not, hearts have they, but perceive not*. They remain *dead*, "twice dead, plucked up by the roots." Christ by reason of their unbelief is to them "a stone of *stumbling*, and a *rock of offence*."

We cannot find out the Almighty unto perfection!

"Can creatures, to perfection find
Th' eternal uncreated mind?
Or can the largest stretch of thought,
Measure and search his nature out?"

'Tis high as heav'n 'tis deep as hell,
 And what can mortals know or tell ?
 His glory spreads beyond the sky,
 And all the shining worlds on high."

As it is evident from our text, and the preceding remarks that *we cannot find out the Almighty unto perfection*, I would observe,—

1. We ought, never, to *think*, or *speak* reproachfully of any of God's providential dealings, however dark, or mysterious.

If the world smiles, we ought not, to be too much elated, and if it frowns, to be too much depressed. "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?—We are but of yesterday and know nothing," poor, finite, sinful creatures. We know not what is wise to be done; but the *Almighty, whom we cannot find out to perfection*, is infinitely wise. He is the rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are judgment; a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he." His providential dealings, that may appear dark, and mysterious to us, are wise and good. It ever becomes us therefore, however afflictive, and little we may understand them, to "*be still*;"—to say with the Prophet Habakkuk, "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vine; the labours of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Such are the perfections of the Almighty, that there is always occasion to rejoice, in the divine administration, whether we understand particular providences, or not. Paul therefore saith; "Rejoice evermore, and again I say rejoice."

2. As *we cannot find out the Almighty to perfection*, it is possible, that those providences, which appear most mysterious, and even the most against us, may hereafter appear to us to be wise and good; indeed, much in our favour. Jacob, when he supposed his beloved Joseph was dead, and found that Simeon was detained as a hostage in Egypt, and Benjamin was called for, said, "*all these things are against me*." How short sighted! The sequel of that deeply interesting narrative, shows that these events were to prepare him for greater good, for more distinguished, and interesting enjoyments, even in this life.

When we contemplate the providences of God, we have often occasion to say with Ezekiel. "*O wheel—a wheel in the middle of a wheel*!" Divine providences, often, are interwoven, in the most mysterious manner! Nevertheless, they many, under the direction of infinite wisdom, have the most favourable issue. We are assured from divine revelation, that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose. Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." There is therefore, in the darkest times nothing to fear, if we are only careful to *keep ourselves in the love of God*. The covenant of grace secures to believers every good. "All things are yours: whether, Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours: and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's."

3. Though, *we cannot find out the Almighty unto perfection*, yet

the wise man says to each one, "in all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." All things are in good hands. It becomes us, therefore to look to God, to support, and guide us; and to be more concerned to comply with whatever he requires of us, than to pry into mysteries. It is unwise to be anxious to know things, any further than God is pleased to make them known.

We may, often, be in the depths of distress, and not know which way to turn, but still, *resignation* become us. God governs. We are in his hand; and he is able, and we have reason to believe willingly, if we suitably acknowledge him, *to direct us*. It is both duty and wisdom, to acknowledge him; and when darkness veils his dispensations we should learn to *live by faith*. God can support us not only, in all the trying scenes through which we may be called to pass on earth, but when we shall walk through the valley of the shadow of death;" and be our portion for ever.

The providence of God, that has called us together to day, *with its attending circumstances*, is very full of *mystery*. Not only, a man, a husband, a parent, a neighbour, and friend is dead, but a *minister* of Christ! One, who forty two years ago,* was solemnly consecrated to his work!

The *widowed handmaid* of the Lord has lost the husband of her youth, the father of her children; one, who was formerly her *protector*, as well as her *very dear friend*; but who for about two years past has been her *peculiar charge*.

The cup of which she has been called to drink, in the decline of her husband, and now in his death, is no ordinary one. It contains peculiar ingredients. But the God of infinite wisdom, Madam, has appointed it. I hope you will, therefore drink it, without a murmur; that grace will "*let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*"

The world *my dear sister in Christ*, has formerly, remarkably smiled upon you. You have enjoyed many good days. The scene for a season, has been reversing. A thick cloud has overshadowed your house, and at length broken upon you. You are a *widow!* Your children are *fatherless!* You mourn; but "*you sorrow not, even as others who have no hope.*" You doubt not, but your husband, who has passed over *Jordan* before you, is in the land of promise, that his warfare is ended, and that after all his *trials*, he now enjoys *peace, sweet, and eternal peace*. Dry your tears, then, my sister, for your husband, and stay yourself on the Lord. while you weep, for yourself, and your children! Gird up the lions of your own mind: carefully, discharge every duty, hold daily communion with God, and be ready in your turn, to follow your husband to the eternal world, and to share with him, and all the redeemed of the Lord, *in the blessed favour* of heaven.

The children, present, or absent, while they mourn, have much, for which they ought to be thankful. Their Father, not only, faithfully provided for their wants, and carefully attended to their intellectual improvements, 'till they all came to maturity, but taught them both by precept, and example, the *Fear of the Lord*. The sub-

* Ordained November 13, 1782.

ject of religion, ever lay near his heart. He urged it upon his children as a matter of everlasting importance. In his view, it infinitely outweighed worldly wealth and glory! In the words of Solomon he said, "wisdom is the principal thing: Get wisdom, and with all thy getting get understanding.—Take fast hold of instruction let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life."

I hope all the children will long profit by his wise instruction, and good example; that they will carefully follow him, wherever he followed Christ.

The most of the children, have already made a public profession of religion. May they all actually possess it, and live under its influence.

To those present, I would particularly say, *be at peace amongst yourselves*, and, "if it be possible, as much as lieth in you live peaceably with all men."

Comfort the heart of your dear *Mother*, now advanced in life. Study to do her good, in her widowed state, and to let her gently down to the grave.

Diffuse happiness, my young friends, all around you. Let the world be the better for you, while you live. Be ready to every good word and work. Pray much; pray for your enemies, and *pray for the enemies of your father!* Be ready to meet *them*, and all men, at the bar of God!

May all the friends of the deceased, however allied to him, hear the warning voice, of God's providence, "Be ye all ready," and profit by the admonition.

The church and society in this place, are very specially admonished by the present providence.

One, who has long stood, as a watchman, upon these walls of Zion, is now dead. *This sacred place is clothed in mourning.* He who has, so often, spoken to you in the name of the Lord, broken among you the sacramental bread, and set among you many good examples, entering readily into all the benevolent plans of the present day, is removed out of his place. His lips are closed. No more, will he in *Christ's stead pray you to be reconciled to God.*

For about forty years, though he made no pretension to perfection, he made you, an excellent minister. *His praise is in all the churches.* He was *instant in season, out of season; he reprov'd, rebuked and exhorted with all long suffering and doctrine.*

The deceased was a man of learning. He was a good classic scholar: and what was much more estimable, he appeared to be a person of *ardent piety.* He was very much gifted in prayer, and was an excellent sermonizer. He had a sound mind; was active and influential in the counsels of the church; but still appeared to the best advantage, *in the pulpit.*

When he first settled in the ministry, *he had one of the best and most united societies in the state,* and was very happy in the affections of his people. It is worthy of special notice, that there has been but one ordination in this ecclesiastical society for more than a century.*

* His Predecessor was ordained A. D. 1722.

Notwithstanding it was so united, he had the pain, in process of time, of seeing it *divided*; and the ancient *temple of the Lord* torn down, to say the least, under circumstances that made a breach in the society, that never was healed. The consequence was, the society was divided; two places of public worship erected, and he brought to the painful necessity of relinquishing a part of his charge. The deceased, I believe, passed through those *distressing scenes*, manifesting a good share of the *wisdom of the serpent*, and the *harmlessness of the dove*. He was greatly tried, but through divine goodness he *fainted not*. His spirit remained unbroken.

His troubles, however, were not ended. *Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than hell, what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth and broader than the sea.* He soon found that "*the little foxes spoil the vines,*" and eventually could say the "*Strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round.*"—His troubles were heavy and lasted long. His mind was on the rack, night and day, and his graces put to a very severe test. Feeble nature at length gave way. The mental horizon of the deceased became overcast with clouds. God has now lifted his hand against him, and in majesty said, "*thou shalt be steward no longer: give an account of thy stewardship. The scene is closed.*" Your Pastor is gone! His sun on earth is forever set. He is now in the world of spirits, and awaits the meeting, both of his *friends* and *enemies* at the bar of God. *Solemn and deeply interesting will be the meeting.*

You are *as sheep without a shepherd*. May you, my christian friends and members of this ecclesiastical society, conduct wisely in your bereaved state. May you be humbled under the rebuke of *Heaven* in the present *unsearchable providence*.

Look steadily, my dear friends, by earnest prayer to the *Lord of the harvest*, to provide for you another *spiritual guide*. Guard carefully against a *vain curiosity of hearing every candidate for the ministry*. Seek for a man of *solid sense, great prudence, and real piety*. My best wishes attend you, and with God I leave you.

The ministering servants of Christ, are particularly admonished by the present providence. May we be the wiser and better for it. May we *work while the day lasts*, and whilst we see our *brethren* falling, on the right hand, and on the left, be ready, *for the coming of our Lord*. Brethren, "in such an hour, as ye think not the son of man commeth."

May all this congregation, take warning, by the death of my *friend and brother*, May they realize, that death is the lot of man; that *there is no discharge in that war! give diligence to make their calling and election sure, follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth*, and eventually, meet, in those *mansions, that are in his fathers house*, which he has gone before, *to prepare*, for those who love him.

THE END.