



Mr. FRENCH'S SERMON,

AT THE

Ordination of his Son.

A
S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT THE
O R D I N A T I O N

OF THE

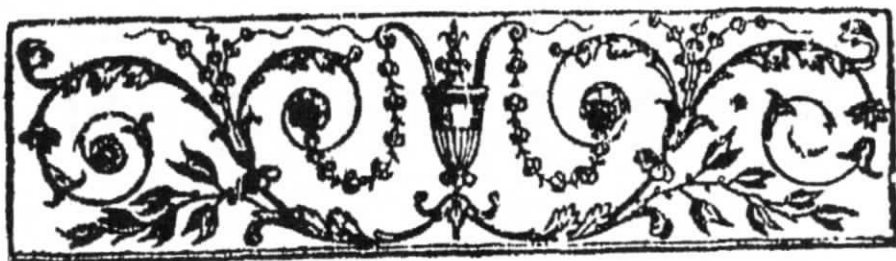
Rev. Jonathan French, jun.

Over the Church and Congregation in Northampton,
in Newhampshire, November 18, 1801 :

.....
BY JONATHAN FRENCH, A. M.
Pastor of the South Church in Andover.
.....

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An Ordination Sermon.

OF all the rites and ceremonies now in use in the christian church, from its nature and consequences, ordination is one of the most solemn and important. It is to set apart and consecrate servants of the most high God, to preach the everlasting gospel to sinners, and to show unto men the way of salvation. The consequences of the ministry of the word are not limited within the duration of this life, but extend to things, which concern our happiness in the future and eternal world. Under an awful and impressive sense of this, says the inspired apostle Paul, in that passage, which I have selected to discourse from on this occasion, and which invites your serious and candid attention,

2 Corinthians, ii, 15, 16

WE ARE UNTO GOD A SWEET SAVOUR OF CHRIST IN THEM THAT ARE SAVED, AND IN THEM THAT PERISH. TO THE ONE WE ARE THE SAVOUR OF DEATH UNTO DEATH, AND TO THE OTHER THE SAVOUR OF LIFE UNTO LIFE: AND WHO IS SUFFICIENT FOR THESE THINGS ?

THE Apostle here represents the different effects of the gospel by an allusion to the effects of odours and scents upon different persons. To some perfumes are offensive and injurious, to others delicious and refreshing. So it is with the gospel. To some, by reason of the hardness of their hearts and unbelief, it has no reviving efficacy, but rather serves to harden their hearts; and thus through their own blindness of mind and moral pollution, they become vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction. But to them, who hear the gospel sound, embrace its doctrines, and conform their lives to its precepts, the word becomes a sweet savour, which through the efficacy of the spirit leads them on to life eternal. But in both cases, whether the ministry of the word have the effect of life or death upon them, who hear it, they who faithfully dispense it, are unto GOD a sweet savour of CHRIST. Thus whatever success the gospel may have, GOD will approve of his servants who faithfully dispense it, and will finally reward them, as saith the prophet, " Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious."

How

How solemn is the thought that to each of us, the same word will be a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death! Who, O who then is sufficient for these things?

LET me then, my christian audience, intreat your silent and reverent attention to a few things, which may be said upon the nature and tendency of the ministration of the gospel.

THE ministry of the gospel in its nature is a laborious and difficult work. It hath pleased God, to take pity upon man in his fallen, wretched and deplorable condition, and of his own mercy and grace to provide a Redeemer for his people. Of him spake Moses and the Prophets; and him hath the Father appointed to be the great Mediator between God and man. This blessed Messiah in the fulness of time came into the world, declared the will of the Father; and according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, suffered, died, and was buried. Then agreeably to prophecy, he brake the bands of death, burst the barriers of the tomb, rose gloriously triumphant from the grave, ascended up on high, led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

HE appointed ordinary, and extraordinary officers, according to the circumstances and exigences of the church. To some he gave apostles; to some prophets, to some evangelists, and to some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting

perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of CHRIST ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of CHRIST. So that GOD is now in CHRIST JESUS reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing unto men their trespasses.

Now this word of reconciliation, or the ministry of the gospel, he hath committed unto his ministers, and hath commissioned them, to go forth as ambassadors for CHRIST ; and, as though GOD did beseech men by them, they are to pray sinners in his stead to be reconciled to GOD. Arduous and difficult is the employment assigned them ; and important are the qualifications requisite to fit them for so high an office, and so great a work. They are required to be good men, sound in the faith, lovers of CHRIST and the souls of men, and to be faithful stewards of the manifold grace of GOD. They ought to be men experimentally acquainted with religion, who have felt the power and effects of it upon their own hearts, and who display it in their lives. They ought to be men of knowledge and understanding in the scriptures, able to teach others also, and wise to win souls to JESUS CHRIST. In their deportment they ought not to degrade, but to dignify their office. They should be men also of good report of them that are without. They should be examples to others in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith and purity

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They ought to be sober, wise, and discreet in all their behaviour. Modesty, mildness, and firmness should run through all their ministry, with that fidelity, which becomes them who watch for souls, as they who must give an account. With these and other qualifications recorded in the sacred scriptures, calling no man master on earth, but making the word of God the only standard of their faith and practice, their business is to dispense the everlasting gospel to sinners; and to call the attention of men to the great things which concern the glory of God, and their own eternal salvation. They are to feed the sheep and the lambs of the flock not with chaff, nor with vain, unedifying speculation, and empty harrangues; nor with that most pernicious and dangerous modern philosophy, which under a cloak of christianity would rob the MESSIAH of his divinity, and mankind of the religion of CHRIST, and of all those hopes and comforts, which reach beyond the grave. Such delusive philosophy, and destructive errors, though clothed in the garb of rhetoric, and displayed in all the charms of language, ought to be avoided, as deadly poison, wrapt in gilded pills. But the true ministers of CHRIST are to feed men with knowledge, and understanding; and to teach them sound doctrine, and the most plain and important truths of the gospel of CHRIST, which through the agency of the spirit, may be awakening to sinners and comforting to the godly. Beside preparing for the duties of the sanctuary, preaching the word and administering the ordinances, &c. the duties of visiting the

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sick,

sick, comforting the sorrowful, catechising and instructing children, are difficult and arduous. If we add to these the duties of reproof, rebuking, admonishing, and managing the affairs of gospel discipline in the Church, we cannot but discern something of the anxiety, the cares, and the labours of the faithful servants of CHRIST.

WE may now pass to the consideration of the tendency of the ministry of the gospel.

THE different success of the word upon the hearts and lives of men is almost incalculable. Some consider the christian scheme merely as a cunningly devised fable; and treat the glorious SON of GOD and his holy religion with utter contempt. Their infidel minds and vicious lives are at variance with the purity and holiness of GOD's word; and discarding all religion, the language of their hearts, and the practice of their lives say, "there is no GOD." Hence they go on floating down the rapid streams of unhallowed pleasures, gratifying their vicious lusts, passions, and appetites, till finally they rush into the vortex of destruction, and sink in the unfathomable ocean of everlasting shame and misery! To some christianity is a mere stumbling block, a system of folly and deceit. The ministry of the word was thus esteemed by many of the ancient Greeks and Hebrews. Hence says the Apostle Paul, after that in the wisdom of GOD, the world by wisdom knew not GOD, it pleased GOD by the foolishness of preaching

preaching to save them that believe. We preach CHRIST, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness, but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, CHRIST the power of GOD, and the wisdom of GOD. Some may hear the word gladly, as Herod heard John, but in time may fall away as he did. The word, like the seed that fell upon stony ground, having no root in them will produce no fruits of holiness. Some who set under the light of the gospel, and the enjoyment of the means of grace, in consequence of their unbelief, receive no lasting benefit from it. Thus on multitudes, who enjoy the same outward privileges, the word and sacred institutions have a different effect. Thus the Apostle Paul, speaking of those Jews, who were excluded from GOD's eternal rest, says, unto us was the gospel preached as well, as unto them, but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. On some the ministration of the word has the most powerful and astonishing effects. Thus at the preaching of Peter, the strongest prejudices against christianity gave way, the hardest and most unbelieving hearts melted under the influences of the word and spirit, and three thousand believed, bowed to the sceptre of JESUS, and were added to the church in one day. The hearts of some, under the most solemn messages of heaven, like Pharaoh's under the awful judgments of GOD, and loud calls to repentance, grow harder and harder in sin and unbelief. On others the word of GOD is quick and powerful, and sharper than any

two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. The word of GOD thus becomes to them, who hear and embrace it, profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness ; that the man of GOD may be perfect, and thoroughly furnished to every good work, and be made wise unto eternal salvation. In what high consideration then should we hold the ministration of the word ? For in its nature and tendency we see it is a savour of death unto death, or of life unto life. There seems to be something very emphatical and impressive in the words *death unto death ; life unto life*. The ideas they convey are nothing short of everlasting destruction, or eternal glory and bliss !

WHEN the nature and importance of the gospel are brought fully into view ; when we consider the requisite qualifications, and how arduous and difficult are the work and labors of the servants of the most high GOD, in showing unto men the way of salvation, we may say with the Apostle in the last clause of the text, who is sufficient for these things ? Who has a capacity and strength of mind sufficient to manage so important a mission ? Who has so experienced the enlightening and sanctifying influences of the spirit of GOD, as to be a meet subject to dispense the word to others ? Who has sufficient knowledge of himself, of his own heart and temper, of his own foibles, infirmities,

infirmities, and deficiencies to be able to instruct others, and guide them in the paths of virtue and holiness ? Who has sufficient knowledge of human nature, of the various dispositions, manners, habits, and prejudices of men, and of their moral and religious state to be able to suit his discourses, and to make his applications and addresses, so as to give to every one a portion in due season ? Who is sufficiently acquainted with the glorious character of GOD, his natural and moral attributes and perfections, and the manifestations he has made of himself in his astonishing works of creation, providence and grace, to recommend that character to others, and to defend it against the bold and daring attacks of wicked, infidel sinners ? Who has sufficiently enriched his mind with the knowledge of the holy scriptures, and the great things which relate to the character of CHRIST and his kingdom, and the most glorious display of wisdom, mercy and justice in the gospel scheme of salvation, to be able, in a convincing and efficient manner, to explain and enforce the great doctrines, and duties of the religion of JESUS ? Who has sufficient talents, and has attained such knowledge of men, of the nature of the christian church, and the rules of CHRIST'S kingdom, to be able to manage with wisdom, prudence, and fidelity the order and discipline of the church ; and to administer such reproofs and admonitions, as the glory of GOD and the good of souls may require ? Who, O who is worthy to take the book, and as it were to unloose the seals, to unfold the great mysteries of salvation to men,

and

and in the name of CHRIST to proclaim pardon to repenting sinners? In a word, who is able to sustain the burthens, and perform the duties of an office, which are enough to make an Isaiah, a Paul, or even an Angel to bend under their weight, and to cry, who is sufficient for these things?

WHEN we consider therefore the nature and consequences of the work of the ministry, we must feel that we stand in need of an unction from the holy one, and strength from the most high, to qualify us for the sacred office, and to enable us to perform its duties.

A just view of the glory of CHRIST and his kingdom, and of our own unworthiness and insufficiency, naturally reminds us of the solemn scenes, that took place at the consecration of Isaiah.* In a vision he saw the LORD sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims, each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. This view of the divine presence and glory filled the prophet with a sense of his own utter unworthiness, and with the most profound reverence and fear of GOD. Struck with consternation and astonishment

* Isaiah vi.

ment he cried out, *Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.* In this consternation and distress flew a seraphim with a live coal from off the altar, and touched his lips and said, *lo, thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged.* This was a token of his sanctification and consecration, and that he was now accepted, as a qualified minister for the service of the most high GOD. Then, when the sanctified prophet heard the voice of the LORD, saying, *Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?* He was encouraged to undertake the work, and answered, *here am I, send me.* But great as the work of the ministry is, and tremendous as the consequences of it are, and unworthy and insufficient for it as we are of ourselves, yet when satisfied that in GOD's providence we are called to the service, if not in so extraordinary, yet in a more ordinary way, with a good hope that we are the experimental subjects of renewing and sanctifying grace, putting our trust in the strength of him, who hath said, *my grace is sufficient for thee, lo, I am with you alway,* we may with humble confidence, with the trembling prophet, say, *here am I, send me.*

THIS important subject leads to several observations and reflections, which may be drawn into the following addresses, to which I now hasten.

IN the first place to the Pastor elect.

MY DEAR SON,

BY the providence of God, and the suffrages of this people, with the sanction of the venerable and respectable council now present, you are called to dispense that gospel, which is a savour of death unto death to them who perish, and of life unto life to them who are saved.

THE period has arrived, in which you are to be solemnly consecrated to this great work. O that he, who touched the lips of Isaiah with a live coal from off the altar, would grant you his holy unction, that you may be sanctified and fitted for his service. May a solemn sense of the nature and consequence of the ministry of the gospel, sit on your mind, and the presence and strength of CHRIST animate and support you in discharging the duties of your sacred office. Your time and talents are to be employed for the good of souls, and the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom. As you are now entering upon the great and difficult work, which from early youth has been your object, and which I am persuaded you enter upon, not in your own name, nor in your own strength, but in the name and strength of the great head of the church, accept, my dear son, on this occasion, a few words of advice from a father.

LET me advise you, as much as may be, to become acquainted with yourself. Look into your own heart, consider your own temper, and the various operations of your own mind. Ministers now, as were the apostles and prophets

prophets of old, are men of like passions with others. You will need a constant watch and guard over yourself, that your mind may be kept in a proper frame, for exercising the duties of your function. You will find occasion for the exercise of patience and self denial, mingled with christian fortitude and resolution. Difficulties in your office you may expect, but be not depressed, nor discouraged under them. You serve a good master, serve him faithfully, and he will support you.

You have the advantage, under providence, of being placed in a circle of learned, friendly and respected ministers. Cultivate harmony and friendship with them. And whenever occasion may require, repair to them for their friendly advice. They will, I am persuaded, afford you every assistance in their power.

LOVE, candour and harmony cast a beautiful lustre on the character of christian ministers. Then, said the benevolent Saviour, shall all men know ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another.

I advise you, my Son, to give yourself unto prayer. Pray for yourself, pray for your people ; and with the most tender and affectionate regard for their spiritual welfare, carry the sheep and the lambs of the flock in your bosom to the throne of grace. Pray also for others. Pray for the saints of GOD. Pray for sinners, the enemies of the cross

of CHRIST, that their wills may be bowed, and their hearts softened, that they may become friends to God and religion. Let prayer and faith be your sheet anchor, that you may hold fast on the rock, CHRIST JESUS. Look to CHRIST as to a pole star, and let the scriptures be your compass, to direct your course. Let your public prayers in a special manner always exhibit the ^{marks} works of seriousness and sobriety.

As a serious inquirer after truth, give close attention to the scriptures, and there learn the mind and will of God. Keep up and increase your acquaintance with the Hebrew and Greek languages. This will enable you to examine the Bible for yourself, without being obliged to rely wholly on the opinions of others. Let your doctrines be drawn from the inspired volume, and not from the vague opinions of men.

In preparing for the desk, in the choice of subjects and mode of treating them, study to be useful. Do not entertain your hearers with mere declamation, and empty harangues, but bring forth beaten oil for the lamps. "Well studied sermons are generally the most esteemed by judicious men." What is the chaff to the wheat? Let your language be plain, decent and instructive; and your manner graceful and serious, as becomes an ambassador of CHRIST.

I WOULD

I would advise you to avoid tediousness in the length of your public prayers and sermons, I cannot indeed approve the brevity of some. It looks as if a slight attendance on the form or shew of worship, and not the reedification of the hearers, were the object. To be lengthy in prayer is sometimes tedious and tiresome even to serious minds. It looks too much like the Pharisees of old, who thought they should be heard for their much speaking; and exhibits a kind of affectation and want of reverence for the Deity. This is very unlike the views of the wise, inspired preacher, who says, be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty before GOD; for GOD is in heaven, and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few. The longest prayer recorded in scripture is that of Solomon at the dedication of the temple, which is comprised in about forty verses. Observe a suitable length in your sermons. "Be not too long, said one of the ancients, lest it should not be well comprehended." Said another, "Satiety in a sermon is no less an enemy to the ear, than meat to the body."

"CARE should be taken, said one of the fathers, that teachers should not weary themselves, nor hearers, with a multitude of words." One of our New England divines, whose fame was in all the churches, advises, "that the preacher should not be too lengthy in his sermons, but leave upon the minds of the hearers a good relish for more."*

* DR. MATHER

ACCORDING to the evangelical Dr. Watts, “ we are
 “ not called to draw out the duties of worship to such
 “ unreasonable and tiresome lengths, as would over much
 “ fatigue the spirits, and overmuch oppress animal nature.
 “ This does not tend to the edification of men, nor the
 “ honor of GOD.” I would recommend to you a medium
 between the two extremes in your public performances.
 This in general will be most agreeable, and most beneficial,
 both to you and your hearers. You may however on some
 particular occasions find it necessary to vary from this
 general rule. Wisdom and prudence in all such cases are
 profitable to direct.

IN administering the sacred ordinances of baptism and
 the LORD's supper, have an eye to the same weighty and
 awful considerations, which have been mentioned from the
 text. Let them be administered with a solemnity becom-
 ing those sacred institutions. And as occasion may offer,
 explain their nature and design to your people, and shew
 them the reasonableness and advantage of attending upon
 them. In admission of members to communion, open
 not the doors of the church too wide lest there be no dis-
 tinction between saints and sinners ; nor make the terms
 of admission too narrow and strait, lest by too strongly
 exciting the fears of tender but serious minds you discour-
 age them from duty.

IN the course of your ministry, you will probably find many things, that will try your feelings, and call for the exertion of all your prudence, patience and fortitude, especially in matters of discipline. The tempers and dispositions of men are so various, habits and prejudices so strong, and sometimes so unaccountable, as not to be influenced by reason. In such cases deal prudently with them, pray for them, and leave them to God.*

I WOULD advise you, my Son, by no means to omit the important and useful exercise of catechizing children, teaching them their duty to their Creator, and their relative and social duties to their parents and others. And farther, my Son, exert your power and influence, with prudence and discretion, to promote a virtuous and religious education among the children and youths of your flock. Such an education is of the utmost importance to the religion
and

* It may not be amiss for you to have two heaps. An heap of unintelligibles; and an heap of incurables. Every now and then you will meet with something or other, that may pretty much distress your thoughts. But the shortest way with the vexations will be to throw them into the heap they belong to, and be no more distressed about them. You will meet with some unaccountable and incomprehensible things; particularly in the conduct of many people. Throw them into your heap of unintelligibles; and leave them there. Trouble your mind no farther, hope the best, or, think no more about them. You will meet with some unpersuadable people, no counsel, no reason will do any thing upon the obstinates. Especially as to the making due submissions upon offences. Throw them into the heap of incurables. Leave them there. So do you go on to do as well as you can, what you have to do. Let not the crooked things that cannot be made straight encumber you.

Dr. Mather's directions for a Candidate, &c. page 146, 147

and happiness of our country ; more especially in a period of dissipation and vice like the present. In this connexion, I would observe, you may do much good by encouraging children and youths in reading pious and well chosen books. The affluent have it much in their power to promote the cause of religion by dispersing such books. Great advantage may accrue by your prudent endeavors to excite the attention of parents to so important and desirable an object.

IN that difficult and trying part of your duty, visiting the sick, tenderness in manner, and brevity in prayer are necessary. And as much as possible adapt yourself to their circumstances. In every part of your ministry, you will study to shew yourself approved, a workman, who needeth not to be ashamed, taking heed to yourself, and to the flock of GOD, committed to your charge.

AND now, my dear Son, may GOD ALMIGHTY take you into his holy protection, and bless you with a long, comfortable, and successful ministry. May you long enjoy the smiles of GOD and the favor of your people ; and may a rich harvest of souls crown your labors here, and be the joy of your heart in the world to come, through the mercy and grace of the great head of the church, to whom, with my best wishes and devout prayers I commend you.

Brethren and Friends of this Church and Congregation,

VARIOUS have been the providences of GOD, which have attended you in the removal of a succession of Pastors from you. To trace the causes is not our present concern. You have invited another into the work of the ministry among you, and to take the oversight of this flock in the LORD. The work to which he is called, is, as we have heard, exceedingly weighty and difficult, and the effects and consequences of it to you are of more importance than can readily be conceived. Death unto death, or life unto life must follow from the ministration of that gospel, which he is called to dispense among you. May he come to you in the fulness of the blessings of the gospel of peace, and may you and your dear children long enjoy the happy fruits of his ministry. His labor will be great, but strength derived from CHRIST will enable him to perform it. I trust you will consider his youth, and constantly treat him with candor and love, with tenderness and respect. Attend to the apostolic injunction, I beseech you brethren to know him, who is to labor among you and to be over you in the LORD, and admonish you, and to esteem him very highly in love for his works' sake. And be at peace among yourselves. Accept, my friends, my fervent and affectionate wishes, that GOD would command a blessing upon you and your pastor out of ZION, even life forevermore. May GOD build you up together, as living stones, an holy priesthood, and finally give you an inheritance among the saints in light.

Reverend

Reverend and dear brethren, and fellow labourers in the ministry.

THIS day, this solemnity and the subject we have had under consideration, recal to our minds the solemn charges we have received, and the nature and effects of the work in which we are engaged. Is the work so great and difficult as to make an apostle cry out, who is sufficient for these things? And will the gospel in our hands become a savour of death unto death, or of life unto life? How humble should we feel, and how deeply should we lament, that we see no greater effects of the gospel in our hands? But let us not be disheartened. God will not mete out his rewards according to the measure of our success, but according to our faithfulness. For though Israel should not be gathered, yet God will make all his faithful ministers glorious. Let us therefore be faithful unto death, and he will give us a crown of life.

A WORD to this numerous and respected audience will close the discourse.

Christian brethren and friends,

CHRIST crucified was to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness. By a vain and wicked world, the gospel and its author are despised and treated with contempt. But however the gospel may be treated by profane, infidel, obstinate sinners, to them who believe, it is the wisdom of God, and the power of God. Where then is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer

puter of this world? For when in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, as infidel philosophy may esteem it, to save them that believe. However this gospel may be despised by some, by others it is esteemed as infinitely precious. The wicked cannot bear its light and truth, because their deeds are evil. But this is their condemnation. Dreadful will be the consequences of the gospel ministration to all, who perish under its light. But to them, who believe and are saved, it will be attended with ineffable glory and happiness. Let our hearts be filled with love and gratitude to God for the christian revelation, and for the ministry of the gospel. Let us therefore cordially embrace the doctrines, obey the precepts of the gospel, and entertain a serious regard for its sacred institutions. Let us regard the holy sabbath, the blessed bible, and the ministry of the word and ordinances. Let us improve every opportunity to hear and attend to the word. Let us hear as for our lives. Let us consider that our everlasting salvation, or condemnation, depends upon our embracing or rejecting the gospel. O that the God of the spirits of all flesh would pour out his holy spirit upon this people; upon this whole assembly; upon the churches of CHRIST, and upon all mankind through the world; that he would hasten on the glorious day, when the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the tops of the mountains, and be exalted above the hills, and all nations flow to it and be saved.

Now unto him who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire, to him who walketh in the midst of his golden candlesticks, and holdeth the stars in his right hand; to him who clothes his priests with righteousness, and causeth his saints to rejoice in goodness, to him be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever.

AMEN.

The following Charge has a peculiar claim upon the candor of the reader, it was necessarily delivered without any other premeditation than what could be commanded in the intervals of attendance upon the preceding exercises of ordination. That those may not appear without their usual number, the author consents that the unsledged nestling should be pushed from its retreat among its companions of maturer birth.

CHARGE,

BY THE

Rev. JOSEPH BUCKMINSTER.

OUR Fathers, where are they? and the Prophets, do they live forever! I had not once imagined that so many of my Fathers had been taken from my head, that there could have been any propriety in summoning me to the duty, to which I am now called by this venerable Council. But relying upon the promised aid of the great head of the Church, and throwing myself upon the candor of this respectable audience, I go forth to this unexpected duty, like the Patriarch of old, not knowing whither I go

WE

WE claim no power or authority, our younger brother, to give you any thing in charge, as out of our own hearts : but, as organs and instruments, to express to you the charge which CHRIST has given to his ministers in general, and which we ourselves have individually received.

As you must be more deeply interested in the transactions and result of this solemn day, than any other individual—we, in the first place, charge you to take heed to yourself. See that you be in a state of favor and reconciliation with GOD. And, as we charitably hope and believe that your heart is possessed of the love of GOD, keep your heart in his love. Let those powers and faculties, talents and acquisitions, which you possess, be truly consecrated to the honor of GOD, and the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, in the ministry of the gospel.

ENGAGE in no worldly business or amusement that shall be inconsistent with the solemn vows that are upon you ; or that shall interfere with the duties of your office “ No man that wareth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.”*

SPEND not your time in trifles ; make a wise distribution and improvement of it. No talent is more important or precious than time, and to no character is it more precious than to a minister.

[“ ———— Time is eternity,
 “ Pregnant with all eternity can give,
 “ Pregnant with all, that makes arch angels smile
 “ Who murders time, he crushes in the birth
 “ A power ethereal, only not ador'd ”—
 “ On all important time, thro' every age,
 “ Tho' much, and warm, the wise have urg'd ; the man
 “ Is yet unborn, who duly weighs an hour.”]

GIVL

* SOME texts of scripture, and a few sentences included in crotchets, are inserted, that were not repeated, but alluded to in the delivery.

GIVE attendance to reading, to meditation, and prayer; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear unto all. It is the saying of one of the ancients, eminent in his day and station, "That temptation, meditation, and prayer, make a good minister."

TAKE heed to thy doctrine: See that it be derived from the only infallible source of truth and knowledge . that it be grounded upon, and supported by the unerring word of God. Be not entangled with forms and systems of human invention. Call no man Master upon earth, one is our Master even **CHRIST**, and all we are brethren. As you have been already advised by your revered Parent, bring beaten oil to the lamps of the sanctuary, and amuse not yourself, nor your hearers with curious speculations, jejune harrangues, or philosophic disquisitions, falsely called science. Stand fast in the faith, and earnestly contend for that once delivered to the saints. Preach the word: be instant in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.

PRAY without ceasing: Pray for all men in public and private, for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our **SAVIOUR**. And when called to visit the sick, the tempted, and the afflicted, take a part in their sufferings, and endeavor to accommodate yourself to their particular circumstances: study to awaken the secure, to direct the inquiring, and to speak a word in season to him that is weary . and, in that most difficult part of ministerial duty, convincing gainsayers, strive to treat them with mildness, and in meekness instruct them, if God peradventure will give them repentance, to the acknowledgment of the truth.

ADMINISTER the ordinances of the gospel to proper subjects; to you are committed the keys of the church, to admit members to the visible kingdom of **CHRIST**, and to lead in, and exercise that discipline which **CHRIST** has established

established for edification and not for destruction. Feed the flock of CHRIST, taking the oversight of it, not of constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.

THE authority which we have received, by which we have separated you to the work of the ministry, and charge you in the name of the LORD, is now also communicated to you, *to ordain others*, as you may be called in providence : but we charge you to lay hands, suddenly, on no man. Keep yourself pure from your own, and other's sins.

Now, my brother, gird yourself to the duties of your office · do the work of an evangelist : make full proof of your ministry : and when HE who is the Shepherd and Bishop of souls shall appear, may you appear with him in glory.

THE Brethren of this church and congregation, we charge and exhort to receive the man, whom they have this day seen set over them in the LORD, as an ascension gift of our dear REDEEMER ; and, esteeming him highly in love, for his work's sake, to be at peace among themselves.

THE
Right Hand of Fellowship,

BY THE
Reverend SAMUEL STEARNS,

Of Bedford, Massachusetts.

THE practice of giving and receiving the hand on these and other occasions, though in itself a mere ceremony, having been used time immemorial, has obtained great significancy, and is designed as a token of love and indissoluble union of hearts.

THE antiquity of this practice may be traced back to the time of Jehu, who meeting Johonadab, saluted him, and gave him his hand as a pledge of affection and regard. This usage was adopted by the apostles of our LORD, James, Cephas and John, who perceiving the grace that was given to Paul and Barnabas, i. e. their qualification for the ministry of the gospel, gave them the right hand of fellowship, in token of their affection and esteem for them, as fellow laborers in the work of the LORD. This custom obtained with their successors in office, and is still in use.

WHEREFORE, my dear brother, in the name and by the direction of this venerable Council, I now give you my right hand. Accept it, dear Sir, not as an unmeaning ceremony, but as a token of our sincere affection and esteem, and our ready acknowledgment of your regular induction into the sacred office of the gospel ministry. While we tender you our cordial assistance, by advice, counsel, and in every way, which love and duty may require,

quite, we doubt not your readiness to perform similar acts of brotherly kindness towards us.

As you are called into the ministry at a time, when the love of many is waxing cold, when infidelity and atheism are advancing with rapid strides, and the enemies of our holy religion restlessly endeavoring by propagating a base and dangerous philosophy to rend from us our best hopes, you will need to be doubly armed, active and vigilant. In the exercise of a pious, benevolent, prudent and evangelical spirit, may you go forth in the strength of the Lord of Hosts, fight manfully under the banner of the cross, and being assisted by the captain of our salvation, make your way through every difficulty to victory and glory.

AND now, my brother, with hearts warm with affection, and glowing with the liveliest emotions of friendship, we wish you the benediction of heaven, the divine presence and the assistance of him, who walketh in the midst of his golden candlesticks, and holdeth the stars in his right hand. Words are wanting to express the ardor of soul, with which we wish you a protracted and successful ministry. Here may you shine with increasing lustre, till you spend and be spent. And having acted your part on the stage of public life with reputation to yourself, having promoted the everlasting benefit of this people, the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom and the glory of God, may you receive a crown of life, which fadeth not away

Brethren and friends of this christian church and society;
We tender you our sincere congratulations on the ever memorable transactions of this day.

We rejoice that you are no longer as sheep without a shepherd, scattered upon the mountains. Your ardent desire and pious exertions for a re-settlement in gospel order
are

are at length crowned with success. Your prayers, and the prayers of Zion's friends in your behalf have gone up as a memorial before God, and in answer to them, the great Head of the Church hath sent you a Pastor, we charitably trust after his own heart. Behold the man, and esteem him very highly in love for his works' sake. From his apparent early piety, his exemplary regard for the Redeemer's kingdom and tender concern for the best interests of mankind we trust, by the grace of God he will prove a distinguished blessing to you and your children.

AND now, brethren, we fervently commend both this your Pastor and you the flock of his charge to GOD and to his SON JESUS CHRIST. May your Pastor obtain grace of the LORD to be faithful in discharging the duties of his arduous undertaking, and may the best interests of you and yours be greatly advanced under his ministry. May you bear him much upon your hearts at the throne of grace. By an exemplary and devout attendance on the preaching of the word, and in every suitable way, may you strengthen his hands and encourage his heart. May that warmth of affection and cordial esteem, which at present appear reciprocal, long continue and strengthen. Influenced by the spirit of grace, and with hearts cemented in love, may you walk together in ways of piety and peace, till through grace you shall be prepared to join the general assembly and church of the first born in that world of rest, where kindred souls forever harmonize, AND ANGELS SAY AMEN, PRAISE YE THE LORD.

