

A HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF THE

Congregational Church

IN GILEAD, CONN.,

FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT OF THE TOWN BY
THE ENGLISH.

READ BEFORE THE

TOLLAND ASSOCIATION

BY THE PASTOR,

REV. JOSIAH A. MACK,

June 4th. 1878.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

HARTFORD.

PRINTED BY D. B. MOSELEY,

AT THE OFFICE OF THE RELIGIOUS HERALD,

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF GILEAD.

For forty years and more Gilead was a part of the parish of Hebron, which at first embraced the whole town: hence the history of Gilead for those years is the history of the town. Originally this entire region was occupied by the powerful Mohegan Indians, with the mighty chief, Uncas, at their head.

Attawanhood, the third son of Uncas, in 1676, bequeathed a large tract to Mr. Shipman and others, who were known as the "Saybrook legatees." Mr. Shipman did not settle here till 1704. In his rude log-house was born the first child of English parentage. That year Timothy Phelps, Samuel Palmer, and a Mr. Filer came from Windsor. Mr. Phelps was the first inn-keeper. Tradition says, that he and one of his companions left young wives behind till they could get located and put up houses. The wives, after waiting till they could wait no longer, started on foot and alone in search of their husbands. All day they traveled on, guided only by the general known direction, and an occasional blazed tree, by which the men thought to help their own return. As night came they lost all way-marks. Weary and foot-sore, they reached the top of a high hill, and the top of a high rock on the hill, since known as "Prophet's Rock." From this height they looked away, but only into the dense and boundless forest. They lifted up their voices and called; and to their joy were heard a mile away, and their voices recognized; and that night they found their husbands and their new homes. These are given as types of the women of that period.

Of other three men who soon came, one was Dr. Obadiah Hosford, the first physician of the town; and the burial of his infant child opened the first grave.

Others came from Long Island and Saybrook. Mr. Joseph Dewey from Westfield, Massachusetts, built the first grist-mill;

the first saw-mill; and the first fulling-mill in this town. Mr. Jacob Sawyer, from Lyme, was another of the early settlers. His grandson John, became a minister, and in 1855, in his one hundredth year, journeyed from Maine to his native town, and preached in Gilead with animation, and with force of thought. Being too blind to read he rehearsed Scripture passages from memory.

Another of the pioneers was Mr. Benoni Trumbull from Suffield. He settled on what is now Gilead street, not half a mile from the church. Of his sons, Benjamin was a minister and historian; Asaph was a deacon in Gilead church.

A little later came Mr. Samuel Gilbert from Colchester, and settled on what is now known as East street, a mile east of the church. He was father to Judge Sylvester Gilbert, to whom we shall again refer.

The new community did not grow rapidly, being retarded by troubles from the Indians, and from contested land titles.

The town of Hebron was incorporated in 1707, by act of the Colonial Assembly.

In 1712 the town appointed a committee to procure a minister. The fathers felt that religious institutions were among their necessities. Ecclesiastical business, as well as civil, was then done in town meeting. The society was the town; and it seems that every legal voter in the town was a voter in the religious society; hence some of their troubles. The Rev. Samuel Terry was the first minister. He came in 1714, but was not settled. In 1715 steps were taken to build a meeting-house, and in response to a petition to the "Honored Cort," that body sent a committee to decide upon a place on which to build. Rev. John Bliss from Colchester, of Yale 1710, began preaching in 1715, holding services in private houses and in Dr. Hosford's barn till they could meet in the new church.

The first Representative from this town to the General Assembly was Mr. Nathaniel Phelps, who was elected in 1716. We conclude that the first church was organized in October, 1716. The town voted, asking the Assembly, then in session in New Haven, as they say, "For their assistance that we may embody into a church state." And in the Colonial records is this entry, "Oc't session A. D. 1716, 3d of King George—upon application

by Nathan Dunham in behalf of the town of Hebron, for a law to gotten a church and ordain an orthodox minister. It is hereby granted them." Church and State were then very closely related. Houses of worship were located, churches were organized, taxes were laid for the support of the gospel; church and parish difficulties were adjusted by the General Assembly.

Mr. Bliss was ordained in 1717. Only the male members of the church in full communion voted in determining the time, &c. of his ordination. Sixty acres of land, and another piece called "The Minister's Meadow," were conveyed to the pastor at his settlement; and he was to have £50 per annum; and £5 a year added till it amounted to £70 or £75 annually.

When the meeting-house was finished the sextons were instructed to consider age, ratable estate, and what each person had paid toward obtaining and continuing the ministry among them from the town's settlement, together with building the meeting-house, and that of the minister. And all the males between sixteen and twenty one years of age were to have seats assigned them according to the dignity of parents or masters.

In 1729 the town voted £100 as Mr. Bliss's salary, against which Daniel Birge protested. Mr. Bliss was dismissed in 1734 and became a "churchman."

The next pastor was Mr.—afterward Dr.—Pomeroy. He was a native of Suffield, born in 1704, graduated from Yale in 1733 with high honors; was installed pastor "*of the Town of Hebron*," Dec. 16th, 1735.

Mr. Pomeroy was eminent for high scholarship; also as being a zealous and powerful preacher of what were then termed the "New light" doctrines and measures. And new light—the light of God—broke in upon this whole town. It was in 1735 that the "great awakening," beginning at Northampton, under Rev. Jonathan Edwards, spread through the towns in the Connecticut valley. Mr. Pomeroy took advantage of this tidal wave of religious influence, and from the first worked for a revival in his parish. The year following that of his settlement, thirty persons were received into his church, and in the next year, 1737, thirty-five others. Hollister, in his history of Connecticut, says, "That revival in Connecticut was followed by a period of great reli-

gious declension;" but it was not so here. Dr. Pomeroy worked with unabated power and without cessation; and in 1739, '40 and '41, when Whitfield went through here, preaching to the thousands who flocked to hear the gospel from his lips, Dr. Pomeroy was already in the work, and this field was ripe for the harvest. During this work of grace Dr. P.'s large house (the one now occupied as a hotel by Mr. H. F. Porter on the Green,) was like an open chapel. The second story, then in one large room, was freely used for prayer and inquiry meetings. Often would there be gathered a number of groups at one time: some asking of the pastor the way of life; others imploring God for salvation for themselves or for others. The meetings for prayer, for reading, for inquiry, were continued for years. Dr. Trumbull says, "that during that work, childhood, manhood and old age, the learned and the unlearned, the moralist and the skeptic, men of all ranks and of no rank, were numbered among the converts." It reached even the Indians, who had hitherto proved morally unimpressable. During 1740 and 1741, one hundred and twelve persons were received into full communion in the church in this town. Dr. Pomeroy also labored in sister towns, earnestly endeavoring to arouse both his slumbering brethren in the ministry and their congregations. In this he was not entirely successful, as many of the pastors opposed the work and the workers. Such called Dr. P.'s labors "irregular." New Haven Association as a body took strong ground against the revival movement, and memorialized the General Consociation; which body convened at Guilford in November, 1741, to endeavor to prevent the growing disorders among ministers and churches in Connecticut. Soon the opposition took shape in the form of petitions to the General Court. The General Assembly instructed its secretary to "arrest the body of Benjamin Pomeroy, clerk of Hebron, wherever he might be found, and bring him before the Assembly to answer, &c."

In 1742 the Assembly passed an act of prohibition, intended to silence Mr. Pomeroy and others like him; but he could not hold his peace; and he was arrested and tried by four General Assemblies; was bound to his peaceable and good behaviour in a bond of £50; was robbed of his salary for seven years; but finally, upon the memorial of this town to the General Court, he

was freed from liability to arrest and trial, and his salary for the future was restored to him. "Thus," says Dr. Trumbull, "after several years of persecution and punishment for preaching the Gospel to a multitude of people thirsting for the words of life, and that without other offence, he was restored to the common rights of men."

To their honor, be it said that Dr. Pomeroy's own people, for the most part, stood by him through all that baptism of persecution. They highly esteemed and loved him. Their "deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality," in providing for their pastor. In after years Dr. Pomeroy spoke with deep feeling of the helpfulness of his people in those trying times. In this connection he would mention a certain kind-hearted poor man—I suppose he was a Gileadite—who came from quite a distance to his pastor's house, bringing upon his back a bundle of hay, and saying that he "wanted to bring something to his minister." In justice to Dr. P.'s frugal and efficient wife, she should here have mention. Without such a help-meet he probably could not have kept his family together, or continued his work through those years. Their boys had no shoes, but Mrs. P. would not allow this to excuse them from going to meeting. Her tact for managing appears in the following incident. In those early days the minister's house was as a hotel, and often travelers called there to be entertained. "On one occasion," says a grand-daughter, "several strangers came unexpectedly. All that Mrs. P. had in the house, from which to prepare a meal, was bread, sugar and cider. She crumbed the bread into the cider; sweetened it with the sugar, and invited the strangers to sit down at the table. Then she said to them: 'If you love God, you will be thankful for this, and if you don't, then, surely it is as good as you deserve.'"

No minister or ecclesiastical body accused Dr. Pomeroy of preaching false doctrine; and no charge that was brought against him could endure the light. In ability and manner, Dr. P. is described as a man of real genius; grave, solemn and weighty in his discourses. In delivery he was very animated; his language was good, and he was reckoned among the first scholars and preachers of his age in Connecticut.

His soundness in doctrine; the wisdom of his course as a

Christian worker ; and the extent to which that portion of his people, that soon after that wonderful revival became the parish of Gilead, shared in his ministry, is shown by the following from the pen of Dr. Benjamin Trumbull.

Bear in mind here, that in 1740 and '41, one hundred and twelve persons were added to the church, and that for three years, only a little preceding, from thirty to forty-one a year had been added.

Dr. Trumbull says : " I was born and had my education in that part of the town of Hebron in which the work was most powerful ; " which shows that the work was most powerful in what is now the parish of Gilead. And in referring to the large number of persons converted and added to the church he says : " They were the most uniform, exemplary Christians with whom I was ever acquainted. I never knew that one of them was guilty of scandal or fell under discipline. " It was only six or seven years after the close of that powerful work of God in this town, and of that great ingathering of persons into the First church, that the part of Hebron referred to by Dr. Trumbull was set off and became the separate parish of Gilead. God thus prepared the way for the establishment of the new church and society under very favorable conditions. There had been several previous attempts made to divide the town into several parishes. In 1734 the town petitioned the Assembly to divide it : " more than two thirds agreeing thereto. " In 1735 the question of division again came up, and the Assembly was once more petitioned, and in 1738 a committee was sent to Hebron, and the people were called together, and Major Roger Wolcott, afterward Lieut. Governor, chairman of the committee, was chosen moderator of the town meeting. In calling for a vote he said, " You that are of the opinion that it is for the peace and best good of this town that the town be divided into two ecclesiastical societies, go out at the west door and stand in a body till you can be counted. And you that are of a contrary opinion, go out at the east door and stand in a body till you can be counted. " Forty-eight voted for, and seventy-seven against division. The desire for a division came in part from differences growing up in connection with Mr. Bliss's ministry, and by his dismissal, and the coming, in 1735, of Mr. Pomeroy,

and his wise, vigorous and successful labors, the division was put off, notwithstanding the sporadic attempts at secession, and it was not till twelve or thirteen years after Dr. Pomeroy began his ministry that the town was finally divided. The growing population and wants finally made it necessary ; and in 1746 the town decided not to oppose petition of Obadiah Newcomb and others for Andover society ; and that was incorporated in 1747. Up to this time the town and ecclesiastical society records were all kept together as the business of both was hitherto transacted in town meeting ; but subsequently they were kept separately.

In this same year the town voted to set off the north-west corner for a distinct ecclesiastical society. About this time the Hebron meeting-house was burned, and this probably hastened the separation. On petition, the Colonial assembly sent a committee to look and set off the parish of Gilead, and to fix the place for a meeting-house. Said committee, Hon. James Church chairman, met at the residence of Mr. Ichabod Phelps, nearly opposite to where the church now stands, November 7th of the same year, (1747,) and made their report in May, 1748, when this ecclesiastical society was incorporated and the church site established. The act of incorporation is to be found in the society's book of records, as signed by George Wyllys, secretary. By it all the inhabitants living within certain prescribed bounds are " declared to be for the future one distinct ecclesiastical society or parish, by the name of Gilead, invested with powers and privileges as other such societies in this Colony are. "— It was a favorable time to begin. It was stated to the first Gilead pastor, after he had received a call, as an encouragement to him, that there was not a *drunkard* in the whole parish. It was also believed that there was not one prayerless family among his people. This saying would gain credibility from Dr. Trumbull's remark concerning the extent and power of the great revival in this part of the town.

The first regularly called meeting of the new society was held June 13th, 1748. Captain Joseph Phelps was chosen moderator, Mr. Sumner clerk, Captain Benoni Trumbull (father of the Dr. and historian), Mr. Josiah Mack, and Ensign Samuel Gilbert, were the first society committee ; Mr. Ichabod Phelps, collector.

A tax of 6 pence on the pound was voted to pay for preaching during the summer. Mr. Thomas Post and Mr. David Noble were appointed to *tune* the Psalm on days of divine worship; and Mr. Samuel Rowly to *read* it. The first two deacons chosen were, John Ellis, their first deacon, and Ebenezer Dewey their second. This was in 1752. These various names show us who were some of the trusted and active men of that day—Phelps, Sumner, Trumbull, Mack, Gilbert, Post, Noble, Rowly or Rollo, &c.

A committee was appointed to treat with a Rev. Mr. Morrison "to preach with us." Mr. Morrison only preached a short time. He held service in Mr. Ichabod Phelps' barn. In September, 1748, the society "voted to build a house for the public worship of God; but one in the negative." In the same month a school committee was appointed; and thus they began at once to provide themselves with gospel and educational institutions.

The first meeting house was begun in 1749, but several years passed before it was completed. It was 46 by 36 feet, and 22 feet posts. The society voted to paint their church "*sky color*." Steps were at once taken to open a high way from the eastern part of the parish to the meeting-house. A committee was sent to the Assembly to have the selected place for the church lawfully established. It was about where the present house stands.—The society appointed a committee "to advise with Colonel Buckley about forming us into a military band by ourselves." Whether this was with a view to providing to meet a contingent call for forces for the war against the French, or for safety at home, is not stated.

In March, 1749, a call was extended to Rev. Samuel Lankton, —Yale 1747,—and he preached for a year or more, but was not settled. It was decided "not to act any thing that should be matter of record, at our society meetings, after the sun is down."

In 1749 steps were taken toward providing a cemetery for this society.

In August of this year the society applied to "our South Association for advice for a candidate for a gospel minister among us." Such was then the custom. It was considered a safeguard. The ministers encouraged it. In those early days "when a minister died (or a pulpit was vacant) the place was

supplied for a number of Sabbaths by the members of the Association. In this way it happened that the Association could fill its own vacancies with men of its own stamp and faith and practice." Ministerial tramps were not encouraged. Soon the Gilead people were provided with a candidate; and in November, 1751, a call was extended to Mr. Elijah Lothrop to become their pastor. He was born in Barnstable, Massachusetts, in 1725,—graduated from Yale in 1749,—was now 27 years old.

The church here was probably organized in 1748, with from twenty to twenty-three members. According to the records of the First church, Ebenezer Dewey, (afterward Deacon,) and Martha his wife, were dismissed to the Gilead church in 1748; which fact indicates that Gilead church then existed—though its organization is not mentioned in the records—but as these names do not occur among those of the first mentioned members, it leaves us in doubt as to the exact number at the organization.

Mr. Lothrop accepted the call, and he was ordained pastor April 1st, 1752. The exercises were as follows: First, prayer by Rev. Samuel Lockwood of Andover. Sermon by Rev. Stephen White. First prayer in ordination by Rev. Ephraim Little of Colchester. Charge to the pastor by Rev. Ashbel Woodbridge of Glastonbury. Last ordaining prayer by Rev. Isaac Chalker. Right hand of fellowship by Dr. Benjamin Pomeroy of Hebron. Mr. Lothrop's salary was to be, the use of forty acres of land; and, as the call says, "£500 in money, the old tenor, according to its present value, to pay within the time of twelve months after the day of his ordination with us. £500 the second year of his ministry with us, in old tenor money according to its present value, and that to be his stated salary yearly and every year, so long as he continues to be our minister." Mr. Lothrop was to receive £500 in "*old tenor money*." There were three grades of this Colonial currency—old tenor, new tenor, and middle tenor. The old tenor, here mentioned, was worth only about one-seventh of its face value, and the £500 salary was about equal to £60 in specie; and afterward Mr. Lothrop received £60 in lawful money, instead of the £500 in old tenor. This old tenor money was, bills of credit, issued by the Colony of Connecticut, during the Spanish and French war, amounting

in the aggregate to £80,000; and its value changed with the fluctuating condition of the Colonial finances. Articles of produce were then made legal tender in payment of ministers' salaries, at designated prices, according to the value of the currency, e. g. Wheat at 36 s. per bushel—Rye at 27 s.—Pork at 20 pence a pound. But each year a committee was appointed to compute with the pastor for his salary; "and those species before mentioned," (i. e. the products) were to be the standard equally, (as they say,) to make said computation by; and Mr. Lothrop, together with a committee chosen for this purpose are to state said salary, according to the general market price of those species; and if they do not agree, refer it to judicious men mutually chosen by them."

As showing his style and sentiments, I here quote from Mr. Lothrop's response to his call. "To the Church and Congregation usually worshipping in Gilead:—Dearly Beloved—Since the all disposing providence of God has ordered and inclined your hearts to give me a call to the pastoral office of a minister among you, I must acknowledge the goodness of God and the respect and honor you have herein shown me, which I am unworthy of; yet duty obliges me, and a desire to do service for God, to consider the same. Therefore I have taken it into my serious consideration, and have endeavored impartially to weigh it with my duty in the balance of the sanctuary, and considering the unity and good agreement there seem at present to appear, prevails with me to hope it may be a happy omen of good for my usefulness among you. I therefore cheerfully accept your call and the generous encouragement you have given for my subsistence, relying upon your faithfulness and honor for the fulfillment of them and whatever may appear necessary hereafter for a sufficient support, as it is highly reasonable and that which the gospel abundantly insists upon. So I shall expect such an honorable and sufficient maintenance while I continue your minister as the gospel requires in order for a faithful discharge of that arduous and important work; and I trust you will be holpen together with your prayers, that my ministry may be serviceable to the spiritual and eternal welfare of your souls, and that I may be faithful to my Lord and Master."

Their way of seating the meeting-house shows that, while the

fathers did not transplant to this virgin soil the English aristocracy, still there were recognized grades and distinctions in the social fabric even here. The first grade was composed of those from the learned professions; yet there were classes in common society as appears from this action of the Gilead society.

In 1756 the committee appointed to seat the people in the meeting-house, was instructed to have regard to their respective (property) lists from the foundation of the meeting-house till the year 1755, i. e. the past five or six years, together with a due regard to the age of the persons. In that same year the society voted to seat "men and their wives together."

In 1761 the society "voted to color the pulpit canopy, breast work and pillows." The "canopy" was the "sounding board" above the pulpit, and the breast work and pillows or pillars were probably the pulpit and its supports. The color of the canopy, and pillars, and entire pulpit, was a light red, slightly striped with white; and was considered in that day a high finish.

In 1770 Mr. Thomas Post was elected Deacon—before which the pastor preached from Acts vi. 5, "And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost."

In 1782 persons were chosen to tune the Psalms on days of public worship; but it was decided to sing without reading, i. e. without *lining* two lines at a time as they sung, as had been their custom. Up to 1783 the church seems to have been seated only with benches, but in that year it was decided to build eight square pews. And a committee was chosen to *dignify* the meeting-house; but not long after the dignification of the meeting-house was "abrogated and made void."

Of Mr. Lothrop, in his work, some things may be said. He was highly and affectionately esteemed by his people, who, long after his decease found delight in speaking of his good qualities. One of his deacons in old age, thirty years or more after his death, said, "that if he might be received into heaven when he died, and there meet his dear old pastor, he should be so far satisfied."

Mr. Lothrop was a man of large frame, dignified in manner, having an air of conscious superiority. His dress was of the ancient style; a large white wig, with try-cornered hat, consti-

tuted his head geer, till toward the close of his life, when on common occasions—being bald—he wore a white cloth cap. He spoke in a loud and commanding tone of voice, yet was peculiarly tender in spirit, which appeared specially in times of affliction among his people. He excelled on funeral occasions in sermons and in prayers; bringing up thoughts and considerations of peculiar fitness and impressiveness. His ordinary preaching was of the rousing stamp, as is indicated by the appointment of a committee in 1756 to provide a *pillow* or cushion, for him to lean and pound upon. The breast work of the pulpit from which Mr. Lathrop preached, was up to the arm-pits; and Mr. Nichols, the third pastor, says that he in preaching from that pulpit stood on a stool nearly two feet high. But Mr. Lothrop did not always succeed—more than modern preachers—in keeping his hard-working hearers all awake. It is said that on one Sabbath he noticed a man before him dozing. In an earnest tone he called out, "*Wake up, brother Phelps, wake up.*" "Brother Phelps" raised his eyes and said, "I was not asleep, sir." If tradition can be relied upon, he sometimes saw more than one of his hearers drowsy. Apropos, I would here quote from a poem, composed and read by Rev. I. N. Tarbox, at a centennial celebration for Tolland county, at Tolland, July 4th, 1876. The several parishes have mention in turn. And as he rises from Hebron, he says:—

"So now we bid the vale adieu;
And mount to Gilead's height,
From Gilead's rocks the prophet came,
Elijah the Tishbite.

To keep the ancient record good
Elijah reappears
To fill old Gilead's ministry
For five and forty years.

There was a Lothrop to his name;
And as the story goes
He saw, one Sabbath afternoon
His hearers in repose.

He stop'd and said—"Of all my flock
One-half are fast asleep.
And it seems pitiful enough
To make the angels weep."

Up sprang a bold parishioner,
Whose righteous soul was stirred,
And looking round, said he, "not quite;
I think about one-third."

By this time the sleepers were awake,
For the remaining way,
And heard what earnest words
The preacher had to say."

There is another tradition too good to be lost. It was the right of the minister in those early times to call upon any parishioner at pleasure to work for him in payment of his tax. Mr. Lothrop, it is said, called upon a man to aid him, and he put him to plowing. By and by his Reverence goes out into the field and finds his man resting his team and sitting on the plow beam; and he says to him, "Couldn't you put up a little fence while the team is resting?" The man's reply was: "Couldn't you take a little flax into the pulpit and swingle it while the people are singing?"

Some of Mr. Lothrop's manuscript sermons are yet in existence. I have three of them, preached respectively in 1778, 1790 and 1793. The paper used is about 4 by 6 inches—is not ruled—the writing is close, quite fine and legible. There is evinced clear perception of the truth, breadth of view and force of thought. Marks and abbreviations are numerous. Scripture quotations abound as proof texts.

It is evident that Mr. Lothrop heartily endorsed what is termed "The half way covenant" plan. In the first settlement of the Colony ministers and churches were at one in requiring as a condition of church membership, that candidates give evidence of a radical change of heart; and they had to declare it, and give their Christian experience, and publicly assent to the prescribed confession of faith and enter into covenant with God and his people. But about 1750 or '55, a party sprang up in the ministry and churches ready to admit all persons of regular life, to fellowship in the church, upon their confessing in general to a belief in Christianity, and without regard to experimental religion. The children of such parents were regarded as candidates for baptism, and later for church membership, on their "*owning of the Covenant.*"

A general council held in Boston, in 1757, declared it to be the duty of adults—baptized in infancy—"to own the Covenant they made with their parents, by entering thereinto in their own persons; that the church is obliged to call upon them for the performance thereof, and in case of refusal, they were liable to

censure by the church." Those thus owning the Covenant, if not scandalous in their lives, were allowed to bring *their* children for baptism.

In ten years, from 1769 to 1779, Pastor Lothrop baptized two hundred and twenty-four children. A large proportion of them were undoubtedly on the half covenant plan; and this plan seems to have been carried out during Mr. Lothrop's ministry. After his death the church gave up the plan and compromised with the half-way members, by allowing those who wished to come into full communion without publicly assenting to the articles of belief. Some accepted the offer, and for thirty or more years were regarded as in full and regular standing in the church.

Mr. Lothrop was in Gilead during the eventful period marked by the revolutionary war. He was a true patriot, and did not hesitate, in the face of Tories, to "show his colors." A volunteer company was raised in this vicinity, and mostly in Gilead to hold itself ready for service. Soon the order came for them to join the general army. They gathered, a band of heroic men, at the house of God. Here their pastor met and addressed them, and prayed with and for them and gave them his benediction.

In doctrine Mr. Lothrop showed incorruptness, as attest his yet remaining sermons, and the influence of his ministry.

Mr. Lothrop married Miss Silence Leonard from Rhode Isl. and. She was dignified by the people as *Madam* Lothrop. There were here born to them eleven children; nine daughters and two sons.

Leonard Elijah graduated from Yale in 1787, and died in 1843. He was a lawyer. He also educated his son, Elijah Leonard, at Middlebury College, Vermont. This grand son of the Gilead pastor became a D. D.: was settled over the Congregational church in Salisbury, Connecticut, in 1825; afterward in Auburn, New York; later in Sharon, Connecticut, where he died a few years since.

Rev. Dr. Booth of the Presbyterian church, 10th Street and University Place, New York, married a daughter of his, and she still lives a widow.

Most of Mr. Lothrop's children grew to maturity and were

married in this vicinity. Elizabeth Septame married Rev. Samuel Kellogg, then pastor at Hebron. She is described as large, very intelligent, social and agreeable; a woman of strong will, of high culture, self reliant and winning. It is reported that Mr. Kellogg was to be united in marriage to his affianced on a Sabbath afternoon—that he was to preach for his prospective father-in-law the fore part of the day.

In fulfillment of this engagement, he took for his text 1 Sam. xx. 3, "There is but a step between me and death." Some of the people who were acquainted with his bride elect, thought he might have selected his text from personal considerations.

Some of the descendants of Rev. and Mrs. (Lothrop) Kellogg still live in Hartford. Two sons of Rev. Lothrop—stalwart men—were sea captains.

During his forty-five years ministry, he baptized eight hundred and one persons, solemnized two hundred and forty-nine marriages, admitted to full communion in the church one hundred and forty one persons; and two hundred and ninety-six dead had been buried in the Gilead cemetery, when his ministry closed.

Of a truth it may be said, that Pastor Lothrop died with the harness on. While standing in the pulpit and engaged in the devotional exercises, Sabbath morning, he suddenly fell, when strong men took him to his home. It is said that he never again preached, and died August 3d, 1797, aged 72 years, 8 months and 15 days. His funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Backus of Somers. His remains rest in the cemetery, among the people he had served in the Lord for forty-five years. The following epitaph was composed by his son:—

"Behold our Reverend Sire ascend,
Swift to the realms of endless day;
Celestial choirs his flight attend
And mark for him his glorious way."

No extraordinary revivals or other events marked Mr. Lothrop's ministry. He began his work in Gilead while were yet felt the influences of the great awakening; and he continued gradually to gather into the church those who believed, and the church was built up.

Madam Silence Lothrop died October 15th, 1799, aged 68 years, 5 months and 18 days. Her remains rest beside those

of her husband. After the death of Rev. Lothrop, the society for some time continued his salary for the benefit of his widow.

For two years and over, from the death of the first pastor, the people of Gilead were supplied by various ministers. These preached here during that time—Rev. Ammi Rogers, Rev. John Clark, Rev. Robert Potter, Rev. Salmon King; and it is said there preached in Gilead at this time or subsequently Rev.—afterward Dr.—Lyman Beecher. And it has come down to the present that Gilead people were favorably impressed by his preaching, and meditated calling him; but if called it was not effectual.

On September 4th, 1799, an invitation to the Gilead pastorate was extended to Mr. Nathan Gillett; a native of Granby, Conn.,—born August 14th, 1773. Williams College was his Alma Mater, where he graduated in 1798. The following names tell who took part in his ordination—Rev. Thomas Brockway offered the first prayer; Rev. Cotton Mather Smith of Sharon, father of Governor Smith, preached the sermon; Rev. Benj. Trumbull, D. D., of North Haven, offered the ordaining prayer; Rev. Nathan Williams, of Tolland, gave the charge to the pastor; Rev. Amos Bassett, D. D., of Hebron, gave the right hand of fellowship; Rev. Samuel Lockwood, D. D., of Andover, offered the concluding prayer.

There were giants in those days. Thus the church and people of Gilead now again enjoyed a settled ministry. In May, 1801, Mr. Asaph, brother to Dr. Benj. Trumbull, was chosen deacon. In 1806, Mr. Ellis Luther, a person in the half way covenant, entered complaint against Mr. William Talcott, who was in full communion. It was a question whether a charge so brought could stand. After deliberating upon the case, the church adjourned for further consideration, and no decision is recorded.

The society voted Mr. Gillett a salary of £110 annually for the term of ten years; after that period £100 annually "so long as he remains our minister."

It was also stipulated in the call—the candidate agreeing thereto—"that the society have the privilege of dismissing Mr. Nathan Gillett from his ministry in this place at any time during his continuance here, at the expiration of four months after they

shall obtain a vote of two-thirds of the legal voters who shall then be present at a meeting of said society, and notifying said Gillett of the vote." Mr. Gillett was to have the privilege of leaving by giving four months notice.

At a subsequent meeting it was declared that the civil contract only between Mr. Gillett and the society is to be dissolved as above stated.

Mr. Gillett's faithful, intelligent and life long consort was Miss Lydia Jones, daughter of Captain Samuel Jones, a wealthy Hebron farmer. Mrs. G. was born May 7th, 1771. Her father was a man of distinction in his day. One son was educated at college and became a lawyer, and for many years lived at Stockbridge, Mass. Captain Jones lived several miles from church and had a numerous family; but kept fourteen horses (at times) and they all went promptly to church on horse-back; Mrs. Jones probably riding on a pillion behind her husband.

Seven children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Gillett, of whom two are still living. Of these, one, Mr. Ralph Gillett, has long resided in Hartford, Connecticut, and his brother, Alfred, lives in Philadelphia.

Mr. Gillett had many warm friends among his people.

In appearance he was about the average height and size, had a kindling eye, a mild, kind look; was sedate and serious, though not given to cant. He was of equable temper, ruling well his own spirit; was forbearing and humble. It is said that he once made the remark that he could not bring beaten oil into the sanctuary every Sabbath on £100 a year.

In action Mr. Gillett was moderate; and in feelings uniform; and his pulpit efforts were not marked by much gesticulation or enthusiasm. His twenty-five years' ministry in Gilead were passed mostly in quietness. From week to week and from year to year he pursued the even tenor of his way, preaching the gospel, visiting from house to house, attending weddings, baptizing the little ones, burying the dead, working for every good cause. He married one hundred couples; baptized one hundred and thirty children; buried one hundred and thirty-seven of the dead.

Mr. Gillett was dismissed in February, 1824. He owned the house in which he lived, which now stands but a few rods from

the church, south where is at present the post office. When he purchased the house it was but one and one half stories; but at well nigh ruinous expense he raised it to two stories with gambrel roof, and finished off sleeping rooms in the attic story. He had a farm of some eighty acres, adjoining his house, which he cultivated to help out a meager salary. Mr. Gillett removed from Gilead in 1824 to the state of New York, where he preached a number of years, then returned to his native state and lived in Ellington, till his death, July 12th, 1845, at the age of 72 years and 11 months. Death came suddenly, "and he was not, for God took him."

Mrs. Gillett died in Hartford at the residence of her son, Ralph Gillett, Esq., August 16th, 1865, being 84 years old, and having survived her husband twenty years. She was much beloved by her relatives and esteemed by all who knew her. She possessed a strong mind; a retentive memory, and a good education for the times in which she was schooled. Her infirmities in her last days were great, as she could neither see nor walk; yet she was cheerful and happy under the teachings of the Scriptures, which she called a "treasure that neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal." Her remains were taken to Ellington and laid beside those of her departed husband.

The third pastorate in Gilead, which, like the two preceding, was long, began September 28th, 1825, by the ordination of Mr. Charles Nichols. The ministers present and taking part were: Rev. Lyman Strong of Hebron, who offered the opening prayer; Rev. Luther Hart of Plymouth, who preached the sermon; Rev. David Ripley of Marlborough, who offered the consecrating prayer; Rev. Milton Strong of Somers, who gave the charge to the pastor; Rev. A. B. Collins of Andover, who gave the right hand of fellowship; Rev. Hubbel Loomis of Willington, who addressed the people; and Rev. Amos Nash of Tolland, who offered the concluding prayer.

Mr. Nichols was born in Derby, Connecticut, February 19th, 1798. His father was a sea captain, and his ancestry on his father's side had their home in Fairfield, Conn. When his father was but a mere boy, living at home in Fairfield, that town was laid in ashes by British troops. It was during the

Revolutionary war. After the death of his father, Mr. Nichols spent his youth in hard service in the field; and his food, clothing and comforts often did not meet his necessities. His poverty prevented his gaining a collegiate education; and yet he longed to preach the gospel; and after advising with good counsellors he determined to do what he could; and he prepared himself as thoroughly as was practicable, and applied for admission at the theological department of Yale College. He was accepted and began study there in 1822 for a three years course.

With the consent of his instructors he preached a little here and there, as opportunity offered; and thus secured a pittance to live upon.

In the autumn vacation of 1824 as he was passing a little knot of clergymen in the street, one of them stepped toward him and giving him his hand, asked where he expected to spend his vacation? The young man had no definite plan; and the minister spoke to him of Gilead, a little parish in Connecticut that was vacant; and asked how he would like to go there and spend his vacation. "That casual meeting of the clergymen on the street in New Haven," says Mr. Nichols, "was the starting point on a journey of thirty-one years, as pastor of the church in Gilead." He preached here for three or four Sabbaths that autumn—went among and became acquainted with the people, and then returned to his studies for another year. During the following winter Deacon Sawyer Ellis, of Gilead, surprised him by a call, and by urging him to spend his spring vacation in his place. This he did; and soon he received a unanimous call to the pastorate. This call he accepted with the understanding that he was to complete his theological course.

A gracious God had prepared the way before him, by special influences, so that there was harmony and a spirit of welcome when he came. He says: "When I became somewhat acquainted with the people on my first visit in 1824, I found a number of lingering cases of seriousness, waiting and praying, but enjoying no comforting light from the Sun of Righteousness. My mind became much interested in them, and it seemed to me at first that *I could* help them out of the slough of despond; but I soon and painfully found that if the Lord does not help, man's help is vain."

As Mr. Nichols drew near the end of his seminary course, with deep interest he anticipated his work, as did also the Gilead people. They gave him a hearty welcome. The ordination was upon a delightful September day; the Tolland Consociation were together in annual session; there was a full attendance of ministers and delegates. Before this body the young man came for examination and consecration. That young man is still on the shores of time, more than eighty years of age, and is yet exact and lithe and useful; though for several years he has preached but little. Of the people in Gilead, who interested themselves in those important transactions, but here and there one remains; and not one of the ministers present on that occasion is to day among the living here below.

A few items from the society records: In 1826 the society voted that the *bell* be rung on Saturday evenings at eight o'clock. At that time the Sabbath began to them. Perhaps this was the lingerings of what in olden times was called "the curfew"; the ringing of a bell at night fall as a signal to the inhabitants to cover fires. The practice which started with William the Conquerer, was observed, we are told, by the early settlers of this colony.

The pews in the church were sold, or rented, for the first time, in 1828. Up to that year all moneys for the support of the Gospel had been raised by tax upon the taxable property of the parish.

In 1830 an unusual mortality prevailed in Gilead, spreading dark shadows over the entire community. In Deacon Ellis' family six persons died in as many weeks. November 12th of that year was observed as a day for special fasting and prayer.

The Rev. Charles Nichols was dismissed by council October 21, 1856, after a long and useful ministry of thirty-one years. During those years there were seventy seven marriages, one hundred and twenty nine baptisms of children, two hundred and forty-eight deaths, and one hundred and fifty one additions to the church. He afterward preached at Higganum, Connecticut, for several years; when, owing to the infirmities of age, he retired from the active work of the ministry, and made his home in New Britain, Connecticut, where he still lives in a green old

age—an efficient worker in the Sabbath school—a supporter of every good cause—a father in Israel, respected and beloved by all who know him.

On the fourth of April, 1827, two years after his settlement in Gilead, Mr. Nichols was joined in marriage to Mrs. Louisa Post, widow of Mr. John H. Post of Gilead. They were married in church, and it was an occasion of cordial congratulations by the people generally. In writing of himself and wife, March, 1878, Mr. Nichols says, "God has spared us to live happily together fifty one years, and during all those years in which joy and sorrow have alternated, she has been my good angel, to comfort and strengthen and bless me. For her I am called daily to offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Lord. I soon purchased 'a cage' for my bird and myself, in which we spent nearly thirty years together, where our five little birds were hatched, and where they sang and were happy. Only one of them remains to sing for us now, and to be the solace of our far spent day."

Here we reach a point in the history of Gilead church and people, within less than twenty-two years of the present, during which period there have been six different ministers in this field, viz. four settled pastors and two acting pastors.

We here give the names of those who have been ministers here since the close of Mr. Nichols' pastorate, with length of ministry: Revs. William A. Hallock, 1859-64; S. G. W. Rankin, acting pastor, 1864-65; Daniel Gibbs, September, 1866 to March, 1867; Albert W. Clark, November, 1868 to July, 1872; when he was dismissed to become missionary under the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in Austria: William Burt Danforth, 9th July, 1874 to his death, July 4, 1875. The present—acting—pastor, a native of Gilead, who emigrated to Illinois, a small boy with his parents, in 1836, returned and began work here October 1st, 1876. We will leave the particulars in the history of these twenty-two years for some one to write out in the future; mentioning here that during this time there have been in the Gilead parish one hundred and sixty-one deaths; forty-five marriages; twenty-four baptism of children; one hundred and thirteen received into the church. Also that in 1866 the society passed a vote of thanks to Deacon Israel E. Hutchinson for fifty consecutive years of service as society clerk;

and afterward he received from the Lady's Benevolent Society and some gentlemen, a silver cup, in token of their appreciation of his long continued fidelity.

We have now traced the history of the church and parish of Gilead from the beginning, through successive stages, and with some particularity for about one hundred and seventy years.

We have seen the pioneers felling the forest and putting up rude log cabins for their new homes. We have seen society organizing and extending; and the Christian church gathered; and its machinery and forces adjusted and put in working order. Pastors and teachers have been provided—educated and able men—who have here wrought and run their course.

WHAT IS THE HARVEST ?

Multiform and multiplying. The former days, and these modern times, taken together, furnish some striking contrasts. An instance is furnished by the change from then to now in the relation between the *church* and the *civil* authority.

Then a meeting house could not be located, a church could not be organized, without the sanction of the General Court. Christians were "gotten into church state" by the civil power. Money for the support of Christian institutions was raised by taxes levied upon all taxable property, and collected by civil process. The doctrines ministers should preach, the methods in Christian work and worship were dictated by the State. This to us looks strange indeed, and all the more strange when we know that the Pilgrims came to these shores in quest of religious liberty. Truly, God had "more light to break forth" unto them from his holy word. Their motives were right. Their object was beneficent and grand. And though their own judgments were warped by their early training under tyrannous governments in the old world, and their own work marred and rendered imperfect by the acting out of their inherited sentiments, all which was to be expected; nevertheless they had imbibed that spirit of liberty which bore such rich fruit in the war of the Revolution, and which working out more and more from generation to generation has finally given to us of this 19th century our surpassing inheritance of both civil and religious freedom. We of to-day must not judge the fathers by the excrescences

appearing upon the plant which they plucked from despotic surroundings the other side the ocean, and transplanted to this vir- in soil; but by the ripe fruit of the full grown tree of liberty, the scion of which they here grafted into that hardy and vigorous stock. "If some of the branches, being broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wast grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee."

As another instance: a striking contrast is seen, as between the old times and these, in the *relation of the laity to the clergy* as to public worship and Christian service. In the early days in Gilead, there was no opportunities for lay effort. There were no social prayer meetings; there were no Sunday schools; no Young Men's Christian Associations or conventions any where; no church committees for visitation, or any church or benevolent work. And when prayer meetings began to be held, or "night meetings," as they were at first called; the minister did the praying and talking; but gradually and cautiously ventured to call upon a deacon now and then to pray.

Says the third pastor of Gilead church: "There might have been now and then an occasion when a deacon of the church would be asked to pray, or read a printed sermon in case of the absence or sickness of the pastor, but not often. Such a thing as a prayer, or exhortation by laymen in Christian assemblies was in the days of Pastor Lothrop unknown, and would have been considered as out of place, disorderly in itself and indecorous to the minister. If in those days a layman had arisen to talk to the people upon gospel themes, or had volunteered a prayer, (the clergyman being present,) he would have been regarded as an intruder by the people, and very probably a proper subject of reprimand by the minister." It is said that after "night meetings" were started in Gilead, one of the venerable deacons felt moved sometimes to exercise his gifts unbidden by his pastor, and the pastor was annoyed and would try to suppress him; and sometimes, to shut his mouth, would actually dismiss the meeting.

In remembrance of such antecedents pastors of the present should manifestly be charitable in passing judgment upon their

lay brethren who do not come up to the full measure of their liberty and responsibility in Christian co-operation. There has been a most wonderful and prophetic advance in the exercise and employment of lay talent in Gilead church and in all our churches. And while the clergy have lost something of that prestige of rank and of authority that formerly gave them the preeminence in the church, they now have perhaps all the influence that weight of character and fidelity in their work merit; and the working forces in the kingdom of God are very greatly augmented, and the power of the church for good is immensely increased.

The people of Gilead have ever shown a commendable zeal and liberality in promoting the material interests of the church. At the first settlement of this town, no sooner did the pioneers begin to live here than they went to work to provide themselves and their children a place of public worship.

Thus when Gilead parish began to organize by itself, the very first year, they levied a tax to pay for preaching; appointed a committee to hire a minister; voted to build a meeting house, and laid a tax to raise the necessary funds.

In 1794, Lieut. John Gilbert made to the society a donation of £200 lawful money as the beginning of a permanent fund for the support of the Gospel in said parish.

In 1825 a projection was built to the church, 10 or 12 feet square, running above the ridge and terminating in a belfry and a steeple. This was a new departure in church architecture for Tolland county. A bell was purchased and hung at the completion of the projection to the church, and was the first church bell, with one exception, in the county.

In 1832 another effort was made to increase the permanent fund.

In 1848 another systematic and successful effort was made to the same end, under the lead of Peyton R. Gilbert, Esq., who, then advanced in life, devoted much time to this work. His feeling was, that with the changes going on in the community, this people might soon be unable, without such fund, to support the gospel. In the subscription paper for this purpose the high importance of public worship, and of Christian ordinances as a means of saving souls, is given as a reason for

the effort. Mr. Thomas Brown pledged one fifth as much as the whole sum raised, and the amount then raised with his was \$2,436 00.

In 1837 the first house of worship, that had stood for eighty or ninety years, was taken down, and the present one, on the same ground, was raised June 23d, 1838. Its cost was about \$2,500. It was dedicated December 19th, 1838. The ladies of the parish furnished it.

In 1860-61 the society built a fine commodious parsonage on land donated for that object by Captain John B. Hutchinson, at a cost of over three thousand dollars.

In 1868 the present house of worship was reconstructed inside; repainted and furnished anew, and re-dedicated.

EDUCATION.

In the intellectual and religious education of the young, the people of Gilead have ever taken a deep interest. From the first they had good common schools; and many of the youth of the community have attained to high intellectual culture. Not a very small army of school teachers have here been fitted for their work; and have gone out, here and there over this broad land, teaching "the young ideas how to shoot." There have been between thirty and forty of these within the memory of some now living

And a noble company of Gilead's sons have pursued a classical course and have entered one or another of the learned professions, or have become identified with some public interests.

I can here hardly more than mention the names of some of these. Of those who became ministers, I would name Aaron Hutchinson, of Yale 1747, he was the ancestor of the celebrated and patriotic singers, known as the "Hutchinson family."

Benjamin Trumbull, born on Gilead Hill, Dec. 19th, 1735, was baptized on the ground where the present church stands; of Yale 1759, settled soon after as pastor in North Haven, Connecticut, and there continued till his death. He was full of patriotism and served as chaplain in the Revolution. Sometimes in his enthusiasm in battle he took the musket. The following incident is told of him. At the battle of White Plains, Mr. Trumbull was fleeing from the enemy, and he came to a stream just as the late Colonel Talmage's horse was descending the

bank into the water. Trumbull leaped upon the crupper behind the colonel, when the horse, surprised by the sudden addition to his load, slipped out from under them both, and left them taking a cold bath.

Mr. Trumbull would not compromise principle. In his frequent visits in Gilead, he found a home with his brother Dea. Trumbull. They were of opposite politics, and warmly discussing current events in the evening, the doctor's feelings would sometimes rise so high, that he would not tarry at his brother's over night, but would go out to some of the neighbors to sleep.

Others who became ministers were: Jedediah Post, Edwin R. Gilbert, of Yale 1829, settled in Wallingford, Connecticut, where he continued till his death in April, 1874. Carter Hutchinson, of Brown, became an Episcopal clergyman,—was President of Kemper college for a time—died a year or two since in St. Louis, Missouri. Samuel Post became a Methodist minister, and is now a Presiding Elder, and lives in Camden, New Jersey. John C. Hutchinson taught and preached in Iowa and Illinois, and for several years in Townsend, Massachusetts. He died in Richmond, Massachusetts, in February, 1878.

Of Gilead's sons who have entered the legal profession, I would mention, Elijah Leonard Lothrop, son of the Gilead pastor, and of Yale 1787. Sylvester Gilbert, born October 20th, 1755, baptized here by Rev. Lothrop; of Dartmouth 1775, Chief Judge of Tolland County Court, a member of the State Legislature thirty-one terms, fitted fifty-six law students for the Bar, was a member one session of United States Congress, made a public profession of religion in his eighteenth year, died in 1846.

Of other lawyers—Daniel Brown, and three sons—Samuel Augustus, Daniel Junior, and Henry, all born in Gilead; Charles Champion Gilbert, Gustavus Wilcox.

Of Gileadites who became Physicians, we here mention John S. Peters, (who, if not born in Gilead was really a Gilead man by his family connections); William Townsend, Ira Hutchinson, Charles Fletcher Sumner, George Sumner, Priestly Peters.

Dr. John S. Peters was also Governor of Connecticut, and Erastus Root, born in Gilead, a college graduate, was afterward Lieutenant Governor of New York.

Of Historians, natives of Gilead, we may mention Dr. Benjamin Trumbull, Connecticut's favorite historian; Priestly Peters, who in the same character is not a favorite with all; and Henry Brown. And may I not add, without shame, that two of Gilead's sons at the present time, fill the two highest offices in the city of Hartford—Mayor, Honorable George Sumner, and City Treasurer, Mr. Flavius Brown.

Rev. Joseph Cook, in his lecture on hereditary descent in Ancient Greece, says: "that in free Attica, in her best century, (she produced) one illustrious man to, say, every five thousand of mature men." Gilead need not be ashamed of her record.

A word on the religious training of the young in Gilead. In the early times a part of one day in every week, in the common schools, was spent in giving instruction through the "Assembly's Catechism," which the children were required to commit and recite, and often the minister went in and heard the recitation and expounded the doctrines. The modern Sabbath School was not established in Gilead till 1829. That year it was voted: "that the church regard itself as a Sabbath School Association, to be called the Sabbath School Association of Gilead." Then the Bible class, taught by the pastor, took the place of the third Sabbath service, and the place of meeting was a "ball chamber," so called, a mile or so from the church, in the house where now lives Mrs. William Buell. The course then pursued in the Sabbath School was simply the committing and repeating of portions of the word of God, or sacred hymns. Small rewards were given to those repeating the highest number of verses.

A Youth's Library was also formed about that time, and thus the young were furnished with good solid reading.

Thus we see that the people on "Gilead's heights," and through the valleys, have ever encouraged intelligence, Christian intelligence, among all the population. As we should expect this people have always been *sound in the faith* once delivered to the saints.

They have had thoroughly evangelical ministers—have demanded such—and men skilled in wielding the sword of the Spirit. Church and ministers have ever been a unit in this regard, and this people from one generation to another have been surrounded by an able and faithful ministry. This is

shown by the mere mention of such names as Dr. Wheelock, Dr. Pomeroy, Dr. Bassett, Dr. Calhoun, Revs. Lockwood, Woodward, Collins, &c.

And this Gilead people have so wisely and faithfully occupied the field, in which God cast their lot, that no attempt to have another church, has ever been made. Good order, purity, unity and peace, have in general prevailed.

BENEVOLENCE.

Up to the time Mr. Gillett's ministry closed, 1824, the benevolent collections of the church, were made once a year at the call of the Governor of the State, and were devoted to Home Missions, i. e. to carrying the gospel to the States of Vermont, New Hampshire, and New York. Before that time but little had been done by the country churches for foreign missions. In fact, as in the great revival of 1741, so now in this cause, many, both ministers and churches were skeptical. But in 1824 or 1825 an agent of the American Board (Rev. Mr. Gridley) visited the place, and was instrumental in organizing a male and female foreign missionary association, through which funds have been collected and forwarded every year since down to the present. And for years past, the people of Gilead have contributed to most or all the great benevolent enterprises of the age.

TEMPERANCE.

I must here mention the rise and progress of the temperance reform. The early settlers bequeathed to their posterity, orchards, bearing apples worth but little except for cider. Cider—hard cider—became very plenty. Distilleries sprang up, and cider brandy was plenty. The fruits are yet apparent. In 1825, on the day that Mr. Nichols was installed pastor of the Gilead people, the Tolland Consociation being here in session, after the installation services were concluded, the ministers and delegates, in full number, dined together. Spirituous liquors were provided in abundance, and of different kinds, with sugar and water according to taste.

Clergymen and delegates drank, and in some cases quite freely. About this time it was that the country began to be agitated upon this subject. The churches had suffered. The

records of Gilead church show that it had suffered from intemperance: The first case of discipline in it was for intemperance. The liquor traffic was then at flood tide under sanction of law. At auctions, on training days—as elections—the raisings of buildings, in the hay field, at social gatherings, and even at the meetings of ecclesiastical bodies and the ordination of gospel ministers; alcoholic liquors were deemed indispensable. There were nine or ten distilleries in Gilead. But Edwards, Nott, Lyman Beecher, Hewett and others, had sounded the alarm. In time the sound reached Gilead hill. A movement was made here. At first it was slow, but after a while, in 1831 or 1832, a temperance society was organized and the pledge was circulated from house to house through the community. The pastor's name heads the list, which in 1839, numbered 196; and this pledge and list are still in the possession of the first Secretary, Mr. Thomas L. Brown.

When the second meeting house was built, 1838, the record says: "No ardent spirits were used, either in framing, raising, or any in fact in any part of the work." Instead, before they commenced the raising, the pastor offered prayer for God's blessing.

To-day there is not a distillery in Gilead parish, and no license is granted in the town for the sale of intoxicating drinks.

REVIVALS.

In regard to revivals of religion in Gilead, it will be remembered that this people shared in that great work of God, from 1735 to 1741, with the Hebron people, being then all one parish, but subsequent to that, and through Rev. Lothrop's ministry, there seem to have been no very marked seasons of revival; neither in that of Mr. Gillett; though there were additions from year to year. Soon after Mr. Gillett was dismissed, there was a precious work of grace among the people in Gilead, under the labors of Rev. Samuel Griswold, a distinguished evangelist. Many were brought into the church; and this in a most happy manner prepared the way for Mr. Nichols's labors; and under his ministry the community was again blessed with effectual spiritual influences in 1830 and 1831, and many more were added to the church.

And thus God has blessed and prospered this branch of the true vine. Since the organization of Gilead society in 1748 to this time there have been, according to the records: Couples married, 471; Children baptized, 1085; Persons received into the church, 405; Persons deceased and buried in the Gilead cemetery, 841. The church now numbers 93 members.

In closing this historical sketch of Gilead church, the writer desires to express with grateful emotions his indebtedness to the many kind friends who have rendered him valuable aid in its preparation.

Special acknowledgments are due to the Rev. Charles Nichols, former pastor, for his unwearied efforts in collecting facts, and in giving reminiscences, without which this sketch must have been far more imperfect than it is. Mr. Nichols, on request, sent to the writer several of his manuscript sermons, together with those already mentioned of Mr. Lothrop's, that are highly prized and are to remain in the Gilead parsonage, showing the style and matter of the preaching here in the past. Amen.