

The biography and phrenological character of Deacon John Phillips : with the addresses, poem, and original hymns, of the celebration of his C birth-day.

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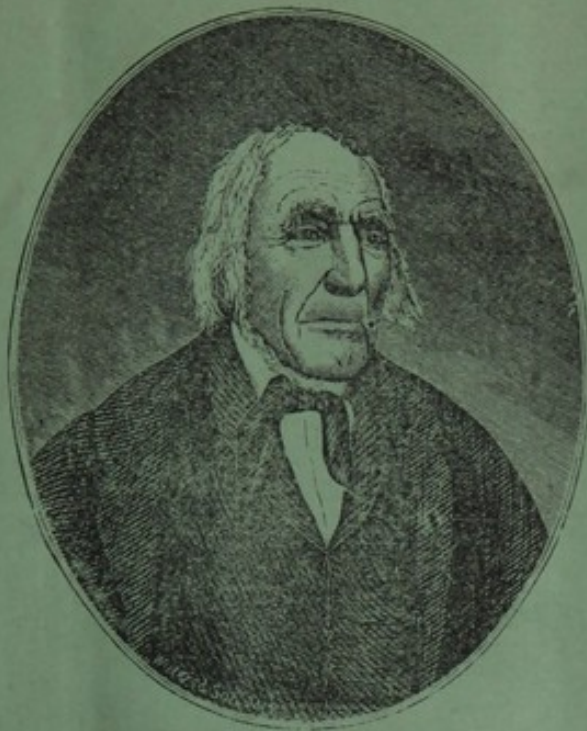
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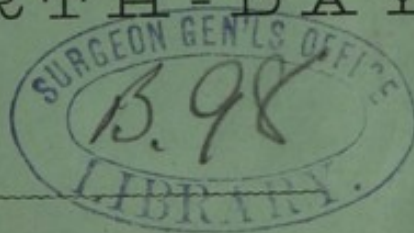
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THE
CENTENARIAN,

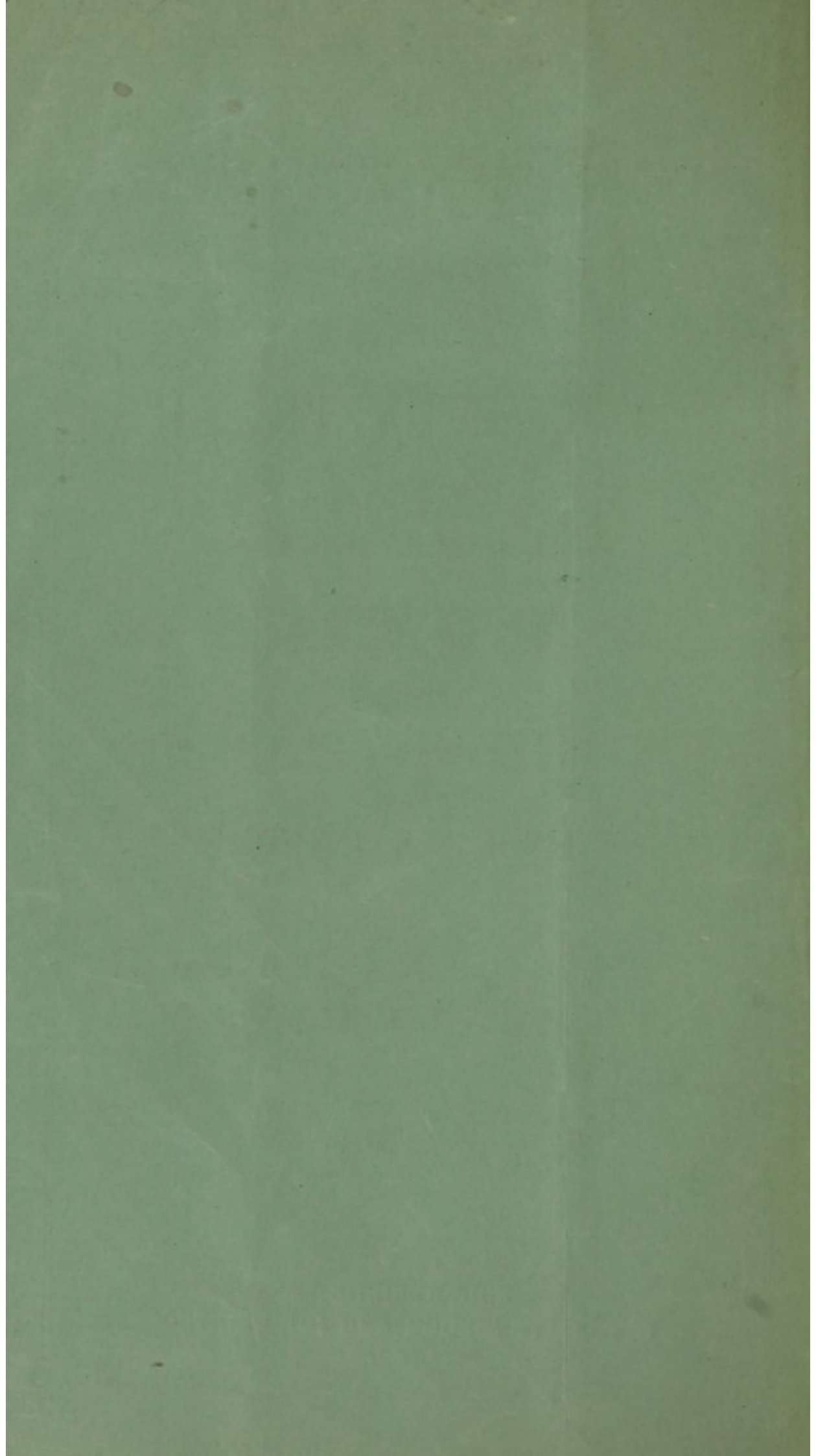


AND

THE CELEBRATION
OF HIS
ONE HUNDREDTH
BIRTH-DAY.



SOUTHBRIDGE:
O. D. HAVEN, BOOK AND JOB PRINTER.
1860.

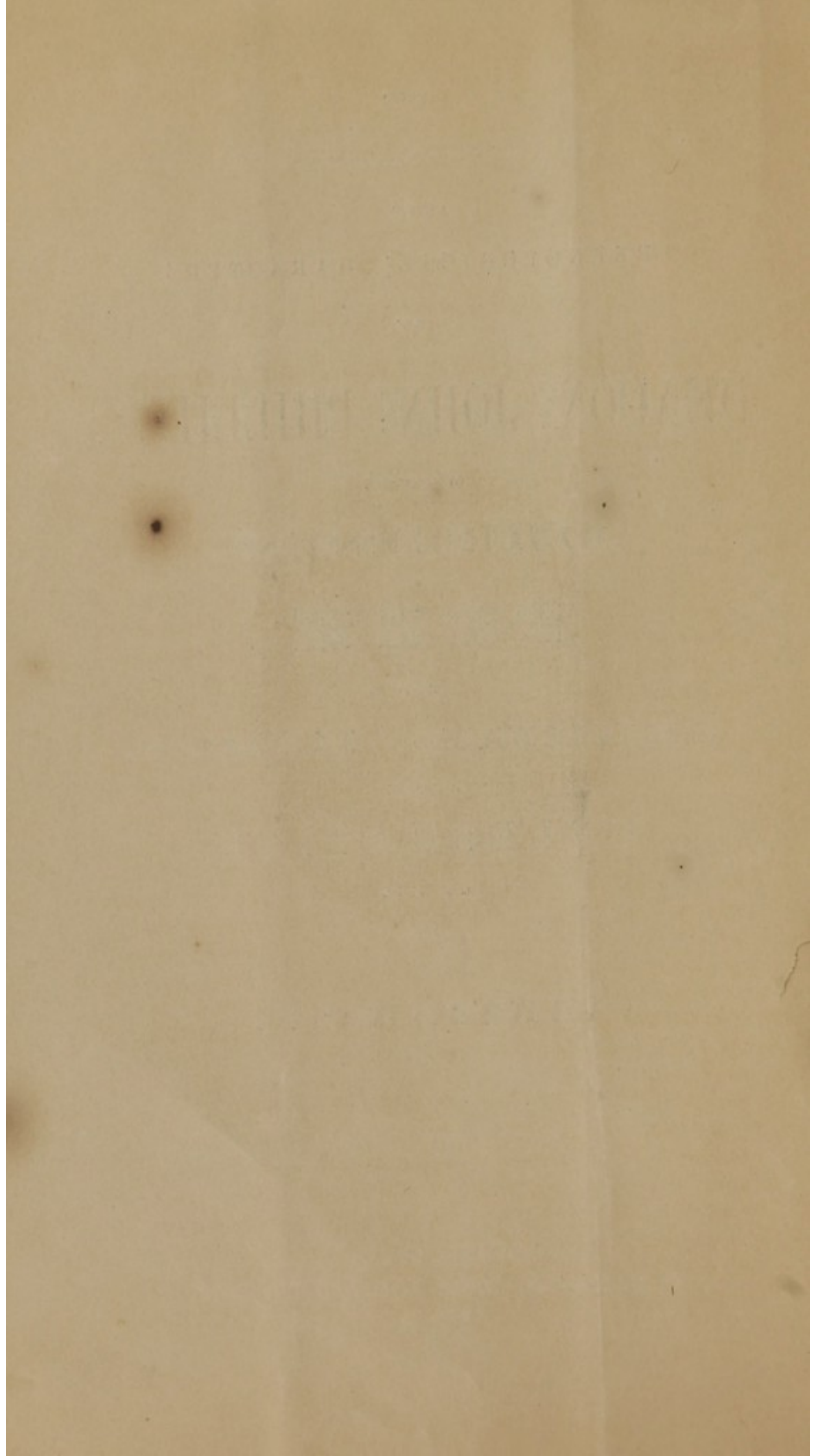


Presented by J. B. Hunter

THE
BIOGRAPHY
AND
PHRENOLOGICAL CHARACTER
OF
DEACON JOHN PHILLIPS:
WITH THE
ADDRESSES,
POEM,
AND
ORIGINAL HYMNS,
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The Centenarian,



H I S

BIOGRAPHY AND PHRENOLOGICAL CHARACTER.

FROM THE AMERICAN PHRENOLOGICAL JOURNAL.

BIOGRAPHY.

BY REV. F. W. EMMONS.

The oldest inhabitant of the town of Sturbridge, Mass., now living, is DEACON JOHN PHILLIPS, the fourth of eleven children of Deacon Jonathan Phillips, and of all is the only survivor. Dr. Jonathan Phillips of Charlton, who died there some twenty-one years ago, aged eighty-two, was his elder brother. Their father was born in Oxford, this state, in 1732, the year of George Washington's birth, and the same day that the first white child was born in Sturbridge. He was born in the town of Sturbridge, on the 29th day of June, A. D. 1760, on the farm where he now resides with his eldest son, Colonel Edward Phillips. He has always lived on this farm, of some two hundred acres, which, about a century ago, was purchased by his father for \$625. He has lived with his father, and his father with him, as he and his son Edward and their families have ever lived together, under the same roof, and eat at the same table; and during eighty-six years, or since he was fourteen years old, he has not had a severe fit of sickness, and for forty years has called no doctor; nor has he, at any time, been absent from his native town to exceed eight weeks.

He is of large size, and stout built. At the age of sixteen, he measured six feet in height, barefoot, and weighed one hundred and ninety-six pounds. His weight has since varied from two hundred and four to one hundred sixty-six pounds. He now weighs, probably, about one hundred and seventy. His manner of living has ever been plain and frugal; has labored as a farmer constantly, but not hard, nor to late hours. He has usually retired to bed early, and rose early in the morning. He has been temperate in eating, drinking, sleeping, working, and in all things. His beverages have been cold water, tea and coffee, and cider, all of which he now uses. And formerly he drank a little spirits in hay-time; but it is a long while since he discontinued the use of it, and does not now taste, touch, or handle it at all; nor has he, he says, drank to the amount of a pint of spirits for over thirty years. He likes cider, and drinks half a tumbler-ful at his meals—not, however, of the *hard* Harrison kind, but of the *mild, Democratic*; having always, in politics, been a Democrat, or a Republican, of the Jeffer-

sonian School. At the last presidential election he voted for Fremont and Dayton, and he hopes at the next to vote for Lincoln and Hamlin; "for, in politics," he says, "*I am a Republican, and I will vote this ticket as long as I live.*"

He has been twice elected a representative of the town in the Legislature, and served during the years 1814 and 1815. He then and there opposed the Hartford Convention with all his might. For fourteen years, from 1810 to 1824, he was a justice of the peace, and married many a couple.

He has used tobacco, too, ever since he was a young man. Till he was upward of fifty, he chewed and smoked the filthy weed; for the last fifty years he has snuffed it, and continues snuff-taking to this day. But, he says, it is of no use — a bad habit — and he would not advise any young person in this respect to follow his example.

At the beginning of the Revolutionary War, when he was sixteen years of age, he was drafted into a militia company, under Captain Abel Mason, and ordered to Providence, R. I. He served here as a private seven weeks, from the latter part of December, 1776, to February, 1777. He had the offer, however, he says, of being made "corporal of the troop," but did not accept, for he "never sought office." While at Providence he was spoken of as the largest man in the Regiment, and was called out of the ranks by his captain to measure with a soldier in another company. They measured. The other was an inch taller, but not so heavy.

Since he was ninety years of age, he has laid up and re-laid on his farm, alone, about twenty rods of stone wall, handling some pretty heavy stones, and he has done it well, working at it two or three hours in the forenoon, and the same in the afternoon, making about two rods per day.

At eleven years of age, his attention was called to the subject of religion by a discourse he heard preached by an Elder Jacobs, of Thompson, Conn., from 2 Sam. viii. 2. He immediately afterward betook himself to reading the Bible, feeling that he was a great sinner. He read the four Evangelists through in course. One Sabbath he read the last ten chapters of John, and when he came to and read that passage, "It is finished," his burden left him. — He thinks he then met with a saving change, and his sins were pardoned. He did not, however, make a public profession of his faith till the year after his marriage, when he was baptized and united with the Baptist church in Sturbridge.

May 20th, 1785, at the age of twenty-five, he was married to Love, the third daughter of Jonathan Perry. The two elder sisters bore the names of Mercy and Grace. She was now at the blooming age of eighteen, and, the deacon says, "was the prettiest girl

in the whole town!" With her he lived happily in the marriage relation sixty-four years, and by her had nine children, seven of whom grew up to have families, and five still live. She died at the age of eighty-two years. He has, with and from these seven children, twenty-five grandchildren, and thirty-four great-grandchildren now living—sixty-four in all. In 1799 he was chosen deacon, to take the place of his father, who died in June of the year previous. He took two months to consider on it, when he made up his mind and consented to serve "according to the best of his ability."

Four of the leading articles, and, perhaps, as comprehensive as any of his religious creed are, and have ever been—

"1. That God is good.

"2. That Christ is divine.

"3. That there is power and reality in revealed religion; and

"4. That man, by nature, is totally morally depraved."

His three greatest, most potent enemies, against whom he says he still has to fight, are: "The World, the Flesh and the Devil." These he hopes to overcome by the BLOOD OF THE LAMB.

In August, 1856, he called on the writer and passed a night, when the occasion was taken to gather the facts and write the notes for this biographical sketch. The next day, at Southbridge, he sat to Metcalf, for the daguerreotype picture, from which the cut of the prefixed portrait has been executed.

He was then in the enjoyment of good health, walked off two or three miles at a time without weariness, and his eyesight and sense of hearing were less impaired than that of many others at the age of three score years. He could read plain print without spectacles, and hear without requiring any one addressing him to speak but little above the ordinary tone of voice. His health is still very good. He relishes his food, eats heartily and sleeps well.

In October following, he had a little shock of palsy, and has not since been able to labor or walk about as much as formerly, though he now walks half a mile or so without difficulty. His sight and hearing are failing; and, he says, he is conscious that his mental powers too have failed during the last four years. One tooth remains.

He has ever sustained the reputation of being an honest, upright, and industrious man, a kind and obliging neighbor, and good citi-
: 20.

PHRENOLOGICAL CHARACTER.

BY NELSON SIZER.

The portrait of this aged man furnishes an interesting study. — He has lived a hundred years, and the reader will be curious to know the conditions which combine to produce this extraordinary result. According to the biography, he has been remarkably uniform in his habits; has lived always on the same farm; has rarely been away from it; has lived on a plain diet, taken a sufficient amount of sleep, and been uniformly and steadily industrious and temperate. According to the shape of his head, we infer that his passions have not been of that controlling, energetic character calculated to wear out and enervate the physical system.

He is a man of large frame, measuring six feet in height, and in his prime weighing over two hundred pounds. He has what we call the billious or motive temperament in predominance. That large nose, those prominent cheek bones, that very broad and long chin, that prominent brow, and great length of head from chin to crown, all indicate uncommon power of frame. He is rather coarsely made, which indicates the tough, enduring, hardy qualities of constitution; the bones and muscles seem to predominate over the vascular system. That large chin is a sign of a strong, steady circulation. Men with such a chin rarely if ever are known to have heart disease, or to die of apoplexy; while a small, light, short, delicate, diminutive chin is an indication of unsteady circulation, and liability to fevers and inflammatory complaints, and to heart disease and apoplexy. That prominence to the brow, and fullness of the center of the forehead, evince a quick, practical judgment, power of observation, ability to gain knowledge, especially of things, and memory of events and experiences. He has always been fond of reading, and disposed to narrate his experience and the circumstances which have rendered his life interesting. — His Language appears to be full, his reasoning powers fair, his Benevolence rather large, his Veneration large, while Firmness is most enormously developed. That particular height in the center of the back part of the top of the head, shows the location and great development of Firmness. He must have been a man of ro-

markable will-power and a controlling spirit wherever he moved, not so much on account of his great thought-power as on account of his stability, steadiness, practical judgment, and common sense. His head appears to be narrow, and flattened at the sides, showing that Combativeness, Destructiveness, and Alimentiveness — which give anger, severity, and appetite — were only medium, while the next range of organs above — including Secretiveness — appear to be small. Frankness is one of his virtues and one of his faults. He has always been too plain and direct in his speech, too positive and absolute in his statements; but being calm, self-possessed, dignified, and reasonable in his disposition, his frankness has generally been in the right direction. He has seldom given away to passion and rash impulse, so as to make his frankness so much a blemish as would be the case in an impulsive, hot-blooded man. — His Cautiousness is not distinctly discernable, but appears to be only fair. The signs of the social nature are comparatively strong.

His leading characteristics are steadiness, perseverance, thoroughness, respect for whatever is sacred and religious, without being superstitious, kindness, practical talent, soundness of judgment, and unconquerable integrity.

THE CELEBRATION.

STURBRIDGE, JUNE 29, 1860.

Pursuant to previous arrangement and public notice, a large congregation of the family and friends of DEACON JOHN PHILLIPS assembled in the Baptist church at Fiskdale to celebrate this, his one hundredth birth-day.

There were present three of his five children with their companions, eight of his twenty-five grandchildren, and eight of his thirty-four great-grandchildren, besides many more distant relatives, and others of his native and adjacent towns, among whom were several clergymen of different denominations, and two former pastors of the church. The house was crowded.

At 11 o'clock, A. M., this venerable man entered, leaning upon his staff, followed by six other aged men, the nearest to him now living,—one of them in his 92d year,* and the others octogenarians,—and took his seat upon the platform before the desk—they at his right and left. Behind it hung his portrait, over which, encircled with evergreens, printed on canvass, was:

“THE HOARY HEAD IS A CROWN OF GLORY,
IF IT BE FOUND IN THE WAY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

After a voluntary upon the organ, an anthem was sung by the choir. Then this man of a hundred years arose—all eyes were fixed upon him; every ear was attent to catch the utterances of his lips.

HE SAID:

My friends, I give you thanks for this opportunity of seeing so many of you present, and for the attention bestowed upon me; but I feel unworthy to receive it. As I have been requested to offer prayer on this occasion, I will first make a few remarks. For seventy-five years I have been a professor of religion, and I have endeavored to adorn my profession. I am now an old child—

* This aged man, Mr. Benjamin Smith, ate nothing at the “festival,” and drank only a little lemonade. On his way home, returning by the burying-ground, he visited the grave of his departed wife, was taken ill that night, and died July 1st.

broken down—one hundred years old, for you to look upon. I feel that I am a child in knowledge and everything else. My creed consists of four particular points: 1. The goodness of God. 2. The divinity of our Savior. 3. The power and reality of revealed religion; and 4. The depravity of man. Here I stand a monument of God's goodness.

He then offered a short prayer, in which he thanked Almighty God for giving him existence, and for all the way His hand had led him; he invoked the continuance of His favor and blessings—upon himself; on the church accustomed here to worship; on the people present; on Zion at large, and that the earth might be filled with His glory. This he asked through Christ, his Lord and Redeemer. Amen.

THE CHOIR THEN SANG :

“A hundred years to come,” &c.

The other exercises of this interesting occasion were :

READING OF SCRIPTURE, by REV. S. G. CLAPP, of Sturbridge.

1 John, 2d chapter, selected by Deacon Phillips.

[He also selected to be sung now, the 71st Psalm of Watts:]

My God, my everlasting hope,
I live upon thy truth;
Thy bands have held my childhood up,
And strengthened all my youth.

My flesh was fashioned by thy power,
With all these limbs of mine,
And from my mother's painful hour
I've been entirely thine.

Still hath my life new wonders seen,
Repeated every year;
Behold my days that yet remain—
I trust them to thy care.

Cast me not off when strength declines,
When hoary hairs arise;
And round me let thy glory shine,
Whene'er my servant dies.

Then, in the history of my age,
When men review my days,
They'll read thy love in every page,
In every line thy praise.

PRAYER, by REV. ADDISON PARKER, of Agawam.

SINGING :

“Let every heart rejoice and sing.”

Then followed :

REMARKS,

BY A. P. TAYLOR, ESQ.,

THE PRESIDENT OF THE DAY.

• The purpose for which we have this day assembled, is to commemorate an event of no common occurrence. We frequently meet to promote the objects of philanthropy and benevolence, or to discuss the merits of some candidate for high political office, or to celebrate the anniversary of some great event in the history of our country; but, on this occasion, we have assembled to do honor to one of our own fellow-citizens—a man, venerable alike in character as in age; we come to commemorate with him the one hundredth anniversary of the day of his birth.

Having arrived at a period of life to which few ever attain, and very few ever expect to see; it has been deemed proper to notice, in a public manner, this uncommon event.

Although now surrounded by a large and respectable circle of descendants, whose affections still entwine around him, as the ivy clings to the aged elm, and by a multitude of friends and acquaintances who have known him long—although a *few* are present of more than four score years, and *one* of more than four score years and ten;* yet, *not one* of those who commenced *life with him, are here*. He has outlived all his cotemporaries—and even generation after generation has passed away; yet *he alone* remains, a living monument of the *olden time*; and who, like the sturdy oak, the pride and monarch of the forest, has not only been refreshed by the dews of the morning and basked in the sunshine, but has withstood the *fury* of the *storm* and the *tempest*, for a *hundred years*. His life, too, has been passed during some of the most interesting periods in the history of our country—periods full of intense anxiety and thrilling events. He lived, in his childhood and youth, an unwilling

* Mr. Benjamin Smith of Sturbridge, aged 92 years.
 Col. Ezra Allen, of Holland, - - - 86 "
 Dea. Elijah Tarbell, of Brimfield, - - 85 "
 Mr. James Johnson, of Sturbridge, - - 81 "
 Mr. Simeon Drake, of Sturbridge, - - 80 "
 Gen. Salem Towne, of Charlton, - - 80 "

subject of the King of Great Britain; he lived when the first blood was shed for American liberty; he lived when that august and illustrious band of patriots assembled at Philadelphia and declared these colonies free and independent; he lived through all that dark and stormy period of the American Revolution—that period of romantic incident and heroic bravery—when the oft repeated wrongs of cruelty and oppression gave impulse to deeds of the most manly daring; he lived to see the colonies free and independent—to see the Constitution, that great charter of civil and religious liberty, framed and adopted; he lived, too, when Washington, that thrice illustrious patriot, was inaugurated the first President of these United States; and he has lived, *even down* to the present time, during the administrations of all the successive Presidents, most of whom have long since passed away, leaving their names as patriots and statesmen, enrolled high on the temple of fame.

He has lived, also, in a period of the most wonderful inventions—inventions which have astonished *even* the inventors; when steam has been successfully applied as a propelling power, not only to the varied operations of mechanical industry, but to the *locomotive*, which travels with unheard-of power and speed; and to the vessel, which navigates the river, the lake and the ocean—a period, too, when knowledge and information are telegraphed from one section of the country to another, however remote, with almost the rapidity of thought.

He has lived, too, to see his country honored, the first of any nation by an embassy from Japan—that oriental nation which has lived in seclusion for centuries. He has lived, also, to hear, *this day*, the telegraphic announcement of the arrival at New York of the Great Eastern, that Monarch of the billows!—that great Leviathan steamer of the deep!—and for *this* event he has waited with the *utmost patience to hear*—*just one hundred years!*

He has lived, too, to see the general diffusion of learning and knowledge—the great and unparalleled prosperity of his country; to see its population multiplied in a tenfold proportion; also, to see “the area of freedom extended” over a vast domain, whereby the germs of civil liberty span the continent, extending *even* from ocean to ocean,

“O'er the land of the free
And the home of the brave.”

Truly, therefore, his days and years have been passed in a most interesting period of time.

Although his life has been long, and generally passed in peace and tranquility; yet, it has not *all* been sunshine; for the clouds

of affliction have often o'ershadowed his path, and sorrow stood moaning at his door. Nevertheless, he has always been sustained in adversity and tribulation; because he confidently put his trust in Him, "who hears, even the *ravens when they cry.*"

And, now, in the *twilight* of his life, when, with a cheering hope and with the eye of faith, he sees the glimmer of the sunshine beyond the darkness of the cloud, we have come to do him reverence; we have come, in sincerity of heart, and with the most lively emotions, to offer him our tribute of respect; we have come to honor him as a venerable Citizen — as a Man highly esteemed, and as a sincere and conscientious Christian. And, as he reviews the many incidents of his life; and his thoughts linger back, through the long lapse of time, to the scenes of his childhood; may the reflection inspire him with renewed confidence, that he will receive at last, that divine plaudit, "Well done good and faithful servant."

And may the events of this day gladden his heart and cheer his spirits, in *this*, his *exceeding* old age. And may this occasion, so full of deep feeling, and serious reflection, ever be cherished in grateful remembrance, by all those who participate in its enjoyments.

ORIGINAL HYMN.

BY MRS. F. B. JOHNSON.

'T is not for us to set a crown
Upon this victor brow;
A crown not made with human hands
Rests lightly on it now.

Wrought from a century of years,
Of work, and faith, and prayer;
Of household loves, and Christian ties —
And God hath placed it there.

Whom God hath crowned, we reverence.
Ours be the strife, to win,
By years of full obedience,
The guerdon granted him.

Through "length of days" these Pilgrim feet,
In "paths of peace" were found;
We thank Thee, God! a brighter crown
Awaiteth him beyond.

ADDRESS,
BY REV. S. S. PARKER,
OF SOUTHBRIDGE.

Custom and habit are despotic powers. Addison, in one of the papers of the Spectator, gives a humorous account of the oratorical habits of a speaker in his time:—"I remember, when I was a young man, and used to frequent Westminster Hall, there was a counsellor who never pleaded without a piece of pack-thread in his hand, which he used to twist about a thumb, or finger, all the while he was speaking; the wags of those days used to call it the thread of his discourse, for he was not able to utter a word without it.— One of his clients, who was more merry than wise, stole it from him one day in the midst of his pleading; but he had better let it alone, for he lost his case by his jest." So the preacher who should speak without taking a text, the physician who should shake hands without concernedly inquiring after your health, or the lady who should pass a store without going in to see the new goods, or should come out without a nice little brown paper bundle, would excite an emotion of surprise, if not alarm; if they themselves should not discover, that they had gone so far out of their customary element, as, like the unfortunate counsellor, not to know what to do.

Happily for me, a text is already furnished and opened in the occasion before us. The anniversary of the one hundredth year of the existence of one of your townsmen and fathers, of a townsman and father whom we may call fellow and neighbor to us all, could give the current of our thoughts but one direction. I come here, with the rest of you, to sit at the feet and honor the years of this venerable man; and in the presence of a well-spent life and ripe and vigorous old age, which has scarcely more than touched, not seriously impaired or destroyed, the forces of the body and mind, as the airs of autumn touch and clothe with a softer and more sober splendor the boughs and the turfs of green,—in this worthy presence, and amidst these unwonted and impressive surroundings, to urge to-day a *plea for old age and old men*. And I am glad of the opportunity, on an occasion so favorable, to utter some thoughts which have long been accumulating, and acquiring fixedness and force, from my observation of certain facts and tendencies among us as a people.

When I speak of old men, I mean those who may be properly and honorably so called,—men, not prematurely old and decrepit, and therefore useless, through the wear and exhaustion of violent passions and a misdirected life, but who have attained the closing period of earthly being by a natural and easy descent; fruit, not blasted and shriveling in the green of the bough, but coming to full ripeness, and lingering with a mellow fragrance, and delighting the regaled senses, under the late autumn suns. The idea is a mistaken one, that old age is necessarily a worn-out and sterile period; that it can have no vigor, attraction, or use; that, like an ancient piece of furniture, which has outlasted the brilliancy of its fashion, it is to be set aside, or allowed to stand in decorous silence in some unoccupied corner. The leading minds, in almost every department of moral and intellectual effort, will generally be found, the world over, to have advanced far on towards that later stage of life, where age sets its mark on the frame. You can be pointed, this day, to some of the most clear and vigorous intellects, elevated to positions of honor and responsibility, and wielding a powerful and firmly-held influence over men and affairs, in this land and others, that have seen, some of them more than seen, their threescore years and ten. Humbolt, lately deceased, Brougham, the first orator, and Palmerston, the first politician, of England, with the elder Beecher and others of this country who might be named; these furnish an illustration of how it is possible to grow old, without growing feeble and useless; and how the freshness and animation, and the activity and endurance, of a younger and more brilliant manhood, may be preserved and made serviceable to an age, when most men expect to be sleeping with their fathers.

There is a geniality and benevolence in men of age, arising from their wider observation and more chastening experience of the world, which is wanting in younger men. The untutored zeal and impetuosity of youth, its inexperience in the ways of life, the foibles and infirmities of human nature, and of the difficulties, sometimes impossibility, of realizing even the ordinary aims and purposes of life, quite disqualify it for that charitable judgment and gentle and forbearing treatment of others, so necessary to social and personal amenity and truth, which lend such a charm and gratefulness to the society of the aged. There can be nothing richer, more delightful and instructive, to a mind that loves sober and refined pleasures, than the conversation and intercourse of an intelligent man or woman, who has gone through a long and varied life, chastened by its discipline, stored with information, ready with incident or observation and the simplicity and gaiety of sunny childhood come back!

And here, in this sober juvenility and patient and forbearing goodness of the aged, lies the secret of that strong attraction by which children are drawn to them, and are led to open to them the ambitions and griefs of their little hearts with a confidence, which is sometimes withheld from their own parents. Indeed, there are no better, faster friends of the young, than the old. What, permit me to ask, would the boys do if there were no grandmothers — no dear, kind, sympathizing, patient hearts, to hear their complaints and sew on their buttons, when all the rest of the world ignores their existence, or snubs them away? The grandmother is a unique, glorious institution: that home is incomplete, and that family lacks one of its most generous and mellowing forces, which is without her. How many bleeding fingers and broken wagons have been carried to her! How many towering passions has she reasoned out of indignant and swollen urchins! How many stacks of gingerbread and pies, pies that seemed to proceed from some vast secret reservoir of apple, and pumpkin, and chicken, has she dispensed with her bountiful hands! And how many deserved flagellations, after the old-fashioned style and seat of application, have you and I, good friends, escaped through her timely and potent intervention! Dear, good, loving, generous, large-hearted soul, may you never be wanting at our firesides, and never be forgotten in our hearts.

But not only should we cherish the presence of the aged for their matured power and wisdom, and the quality and benevolence of their hearts; we want them among us also for the silent, but not ineffective, conservatism they exert on our manners, thoughts, purposes, and life. Allow me to say, that we have this want, not as men merely, in common with all the members of the race, but especially as Americans. No one questions that we are a great and prosperous nation. We have an honorable history, and there is doubtless before us a career of expansion and greatness. But we are and free from the imperfection and evil which are incident to everything human. While our free institutions, and our vast openings and unrivaled facilities for enterprise and trade, encourage a wide and unexampled material and national development, they also stimulate some side-shoots and under-growths, not contemplated in the design of our planting. Among these may here be particularly mentioned, that leveling freedom and irreverence both of habits and thought, easily passing over, if not in time counteracted, into general infidelity and lawlessness, with which we deal with persons and things, and dignities and powers, even the most venerable and proved. A proper self-assertion and independence are indispen-

sable elements of strong and effective character; but there is an adjacent territory, growing thick with all manner of baleful and destructive fruit, which may be easily mistaken for it—licentiousness. And what that will do, when it becomes a pervading element, morally and politically, among a people, let the crimes and sorrows, let the bloody and admonitory history, of atheistic and revolutionary France witness.

Added to this, and existing as a kind of twin evil, there are the impatience and haste, and the stimulated growth and unripe and precocious development, which so much characterize our pursuit and life, and so seriously detract from the solidity and permanence of our success. Our boys grow to be men, and our girls, women, too soon. A youngster of fifteen, in these modern and improved days, expects to smoke cigars and go to see the girls, like any other gentleman, if he does not also try his hand at politics and swearing; while a man of fifty, who may have just attained the prime and the glory of his manhood and effectiveness, and is therefore most thoroughly qualified, from varied study and experience, and the long accumulation of mental stores and moral force, to serve his country and the race, is in his modest and valuable judgment only an "old fellow," who has seen his day! and who can be expected to have no further employment in life, than to wear specs and read the newspapers. An American is a kind of incarnated principle of speed; but his speed is too often the uncertain and bewildering motion of the rocket, which explodes among the clouds, and not the steady and imposing movement of the powerful locomotive, which draws a train of loaded cars after it. He plants his beans, you may be sure, and plenty of them; but then, he digs them up next day to see if they are growing. If the building of the world had been made a matter of contract, he would have bid for it, and he would have engaged to finish the job in three days, if not less; but it is exceedingly doubtful if it would have stood to the present time. The sky would have been blued with a thin wash, the sun would have proved nothing but a clever pinch-beck, all his birds would have been made the most unexceptionable spread eagles, and instead of selling wooden hams, as report affirms he did down in Connecticut, the whole original "critter" would have been pine!

To these alloying tendencies and defects in our national character, we want these wiser minds and these aged men among us to act as a counter and educating force. We want them to counsel moderation in our speed, and self-control in our freedom. We want them to keep from dying out among us the sentiments of

modesty, veneration, and subordination to rightful authority. We want their venerable forms and their white hairs to mingle with us, in our assemblies and at our firesides, to remind us of the limits of our opportunity and our strength, and to keep us from forgetting those more solemn and enduring truths and facts, which concern our future. There is in the simple presence of the old a power over our thought and actions of which few ever stopped to think—a power, the more pervading and affective, because so undemonstrative and silent. It is not in their presence these unseen and evil growths of the mind, which deface or destroy character, put forth; not there that youth learns forwardness, levity indulges its folly, and loud-mouthed irreligion proclaims its shame. There is something in those white hairs, there is something in that solemnity of age, there is something in that weight and glory of years, and that patriarchal dignity and sacredness, which the Creator has flung around those who have passed to the further limit of life, that repress these as impertinances and encourage better and manlier thoughts.

Let us, then, cherish and honor ever the old. Let us behold, with filial joy and reverential affection, these aged ones, whom heaven has loaned a little longer to us from its society and its rewards. Never come the thought, that they have outlived their use. Never come the day, when there shall be no old among us, or they shall cease to be revered and loved by us. It will be a day, if ever it come, of disaster and sorrow—a day that will mark the beginning of our national decadence and fall. That is a beautiful and significant picture, which Job gives of himself, not as a prince, or man of character and benevolence only, but as one also who had seen years:—“The young men saw me and hid themselves: and the aged arose and stood up. The princes refrained talking, and laid their hand on their mouth. When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me. Unto me men gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel. After my words they spake not again; and my speech dropped upon them. And they waited for me as for the rain; and they opened their mouth wide, as for the latter rain.” Happy the people, and strong the elements of character of that generation, among whom such filial and reverent virtues grow; and happy their men of age, who bring to their years and their hoariness the piety and wisdom, the blameless lip and the upright mind, which command the defence and honoring.

I have thus far considered old age in its relation of serviceableness to others. In the few words that remain,—for there are other speakers yet to follow in these interesting services—let me

speaking of its desirableness as a personal experience and attainment. We not unfrequently hear the expression, inconsiderately I think uttered, or called out by some unfortunate aspect in which age has been seen, "I wish never to live to be old." If to be old, means to be decrepit and useless, and to be lingering amidst scenes, which we can no longer adorn or enjoy; if it is to have the mind darkened and the reason put out, and to be cast a helpless and pitiful wreck upon hands that may decline or weary under the imposed care; I do most fervently sympathize with the prayer. Let never such a calamity fall upon you or me; let the ship go down while her lights are yet burning, and her canvass yet spreads to the gales, not drift on the waters dismantled and deserted. But if it be only to have the glory of the meridian changed to the glory of the sunset; if it be to carry a vigorous and capable manhood, subdued and improved, into the contemplations and pursuits of a happy and useful age; then I desire, in my time, to have my sun stand over the Western hills and go down in the evening sky. I wish to see and enjoy as much of this life, and contribute as largely by my influence, whatever it may be, to the progress of the race and the righting of the world, as I can.

God has made us human, and has made this world and this life the theatre of our human interests and affections, with innumerable ties and attractions to attach and detain us here; and not even extremest old age, with the added motive of religious expectations and desire, ever entirely quenches those affections, or disunites those ties. This aged father before us, though he has seen to-day his hundred years, and though the gates of heaven seem to his ripening spirit very near and desirable, retains doubtless an interest in the events and fortunes of that world, which has been so long his home, where is the land which he loved with a patriot's heart, and where the great Captain of his salvation fought and triumphed for the redemption of its lost.

The Christian's interest in this world, it never departs from his heart, it never ceases its warm throbbings and its holy activities in his heart. Age does not weaken it, death does not quench it, heaven will not absorb it. From that height and glory, from that throne of the Uncreated and Eternal, the glorified spirit will look down upon the great battle waging here for the world's victory, and the world's prize and dominion, with an undying and unspeakable interest — an interest that will only caluminate in a deeper and more grateful emotion, when that victory and supremacy shall have passed to him, who is the world's Creator and Lord.

I have thus but imperfectly sketched a subject, which is worthy of a larger and more studied treatment. It had been my purpose to add some thoughts on the relation of an active and well-regulated life, especially of one under the motive and government of religious faith and principle, to physical health and longevity. But having already trespassed beyond the limits assigned me, I must leave what otherwise might be appropriately said to the silent teachings of the example, known of all men and more effective than words, of the man who is yet fresh and young at a hundred years old.

ORIGINAL HYMN.

BY DR. H. W. PAINTER, OF WEST HAVEN, CT.

Now let the cheerful song break forth,
'Tis not an hour for tears ;
Recount a father's memories,
Ye boys of seventy years.

Your limit, three score years and ten,
And more, he long since knew ;
Speak kindly for the aged man,
He once was young like you !

We have no sounding names to call,
As other nations can ;
He walketh in his well earned pride,
An humble, honest man !

God's heroes are unknown on earth,
Yet meet us every day ;
They win their shining crowns of gold,
Which cannot fade away,

The hero-crown of noble deeds,
While more are striving on,
To dare the right, defy the wrong ;
This diadem he won.

A pilgrim — he hath born the staff
Through fortune's smile and frown ;
A seaman — he outlived the storm
Where kindred ships went down.

A veteran in the war of life,
He never feared to die ;
He waits but one — the closing strife,
His record is on high.

The golden sheaf, thus ripened long,
The Master's kindly word
Shall bid the Angel reapers bring
To th' garner of the Lord.

The silver strand shall loosen soon,
The wheel more slowly roll,
The pitcher rendeth at the fount,
And breaks the golden bowl.

Eternal God! Our hope, our trust,
When earth's poor trifles flee,
Our waiting souls, the old, the young,
Fold kindly up to Thee.

P O E M .

BY REV. G. M. PRESTON, OF MEDFORD, MASS.

Time moves its onward course; its rolling years
Denote our progress through this "vale of tears."
They mark our birth, and tell our dying day,
When from this native earth we pass away.
As smiling seasons, in their yearly round,
While sweets from heaven and fruits of earth abound,
Prepare the way each for the other's reign;
So life's events, of pleasure or of pain,
Succeed each other. And while Heaven smiles,
The earth, with her ten thousand charms, beguiles.

I see a little child, who sports with flowers,
Which breathe their fragrance from the loveliest bowers.
For human life to him is blooming spring;
And many fairy hands he bids to bring
The precious fruits of coming happy years.
He sees beyond no gloomy "vale of tears."

I see a full-grown man, whose youth is past.
Life to its various duties binds him fast.
His plans are not matured; he puts his hand
By venture to the plow, to break the land,
To sow the seeds of future hope, and then
To fix his place among the sons of men.
Beneath the summer's sun he daily toils,
To write his future name, and gain the spoils,
To which ambition gazes with delight,
Which in the distance seem enshrined in light.
He's like the summer tree, well-filled and green,
Whose fruit unripe is better to be seen
Than tasted. Its sweetness is yet to come,
When Autumn's minstrels sing "The Harvest Home."

I see an aged man. The prime of life
Has fallen in earth's hardest, saddest strife.
But still the vict'ry's won: — the riddle's solved.

What he has done and what he has resolved,
 When measured by each other, plainly give
 The balance to the latter. For to live
 Is not to think, but do, to feel and move,
 To execute, to influence and love.
 The bud not always yields the beautiful flower,
 Nor does the blossom fruit. In one brief hour,
 Does beauty fade. By one sharp piercing blast
 The fruit unripe doth fall. But few at last,
 Reach ripe maturity, and green old age,
 And loved by children's children leave the stage.
 These few, if virtuous, are greatly loved.
 It is a loss to have them e'er removed.
 Like fair ripe clusters gathered from the vine,
 Or like the precious ore fresh from the mine,
 They're perfect in this life's maturity.
 Their future perfection in Heaven must be.
 Earth has no more for them. They're ripe for Heaven.
 Life's rich reward will soon be fully given.

We celebrate to-day the old man's birth,
 Who's seen one hundred years of this frail earth.
 One hundred years, one hundred years to-day,
 Our aged sire was born. Through death's delay,
 He stands before us now. One hundred years,
 Of action, thought, of love, and joy and fears!
 Well may we honor him, and every other
 Like him advanced; for never will another
 Reach his one hundred years. In this fast age,
 When every thing with such a killing rage
 Goes forward, railroad speed is not enough.
 Yankees are bent to find some certain proof
 That men can take the air or telegraph,
 And go at a speed to make the serious laugh.
 We have no childhood now. That's out of date.
 Men live in our days at a faster rate.
 Long slender canes and sixpenny cigars,
 With beaver hats and striped pants and airs,
 Make their appearance first. The nursery
 Must fit these fast young men, before they see
 The great "out-doors." 'T is then their life begins,
 They talk, they walk, commit their little sins,
 What puny things they are! Such feeble men,
 We've never seen before, nor hope to see again.

Bronchitis, or rheumatism, tooth-ache,
 Neuralgia, gout, consumption, fever make
 An end of them. A voyage to Europe
 May serve to keep their fainting spirits up.
 If not, a score of doctor's kill or cure,
 With pills and bills, to make their practice sure.
 All sorts of *pathies* come to give their aid.
 Of some of them we need not be afraid.
 They'll neither kill nor cure.

And then again,
 We have a thousand ways of killing men.
 For some are killed by pistol or bowie-knife,
 And some are slain amid chivalry's strife;
 Some die by steam and some by sham-built walls.
 How oft a fatal accident befalls
 Some hapless one. Then poison quickly kills
 Which gently flows in many charming rills.
 For fancy drinks, quack medicines will do
 Their rapid work, and put us quickly through
 Our mortal course. The sextan and the coroner
 Go hand in hand. The doctor and the minister
 Are no less friends than they.

Enough of this.
 What were our honored sires? the question is.
 Let this our reverend father say,
 What were the habits of his early day?
 When men enjoyed their life, ate simple food,
 Sought not for strange things, but sought for the good.
 They treasured health, from wholesome food and air,
 Not from the doctors, and from foreign fare.

He lived when patriots lived, when brave ones fell,
 To save their homes, and to their children tell,
 That life and death their liberty obtained;
 The rights of men, their precious rights maintained.
 He represents that age, that glorious age,
 Whose brave events adorn "historic page."
 We need not call the spirits of the dead:
 We have the living. See that hoary head.
 'T is whitened by the frosts of a hundred years,
 A hundred years of bright'ning hopes and fears
 Less dark and sad, as life goes on its course.
 For he has found of hope, the heavenly source.

And fear 's no slavish fear, but love to Him:
 Who sits between the heavenly Cherubim.
 Like aged Polycarp, 't is his to say: —
 "It 's been my joy to love and Him obey,
 For eighty-six of these the pilgrim's years.
 And what of duties, what of grievous cares,
 My Maker bids me pass; should death be mine
 To meet, I 'll curse not Him, I 'll ne'er repine."
 And more than this, our aged friend can say;
 For longer still than this he 's loved to pray.

I see before me those who greet their sire,
 And meet beneath this known and loved church-spire,
 From distant homes on this our country's soil.*
 What earthly honors, and what costly spoil,
 Can equal what our honored sire enjoys,
 And on this sacred day, his thought employs.
 To see his children and his children's down
 To several generations! Such renown
 No Kings can have. The patriarchal reign
 Has honors which no modern Kings obtain.

My father, venerated sire! To you
 I give the honors of this day. But few
 Have reached your age. But not for length of days,
 Would we now honor you. 'T is Heaven's praise.
 But we would thank you for your useful life;
 We thank you for your zeal in our country's strife;
 We thank you for your influence, good sense,
 And patriotic pride, your proud defense
 Of all that 's right and good and true and wise;
 These qualities we deem a valued prize.
 You've lived to see your children's children bend
 Before your God, — His noble cause defend.
 You've seen them cultivate the lovely spot,
 You with your comrades bold have bravely bought.
 They've fallen in the strife. To tyrant Death
 They've yielded long ago. But mortal breath
 Inspires thee still. Life's battle is not done.
 The victory is pronounced, though not yet won.
 The better land you seek is near at hand,

* This was written with the supposition that friends from the West would be present.

On Jordon's other bank you soon will stand.
 Eternal youth and strength you soon will see;
 Heaven's finished mansions too. Eternity
 By years or centuries is never measured.
 Then love and joy and peace are always treasured,
 To fill thy soul, to make thee truly blest,
 When weary life shall end in heavenly rest.
 May life's brief remnant shine with radiant hope,
 May light Celestial keep thy spirit up.
 And when on earth no more you with us stay,
 May angels celebrate thy natal day.

Benjamin D. Hyde, Esq., of Sturbridge, now arose and made an eloquent off-hand speech—addressed, for the most part, to the *venerable Patriarch*, occupying the center seat of the platform before him. He said, he had, himself, been personally acquainted with him ever since he could remember—for more than half a century; and he could bear testimony to his worth—as a man—a citizen and a Christian. That no blot had ever attached to his character, &c., &c.

[This speech being wholly extemporaneous, and no notes taken of it, cannot be further reported in this place.]

ANTHEM :

“Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.

After the benediction, pronounced by Rev. Andrew Reed, of the church in Fiskdale, the audience retired to a bower, prepared for the occasion, in which were tables laden with good things; at the head of one of which sat

DEACON JOHN PHILLIPS.

